

Professional Performing Arts Diplomas

Validation Requirements

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Section 1 – Background information

About Trinity

Trinity College London is a leading international exam board, conducting half a million assessments in over 60 countries each year. Trinity provides the highest quality of assessment, access to a unique range of research and development, a comprehensive curriculum framework and a wide-ranging support service for teachers and students.

Trinity validates courses leading to its qualifications which are offered by organisations in the state and independent sectors in the UK and worldwide.

Trinity is recognised by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), which regulates by setting standards and rules that awarding organisations need to meet when they design, deliver and award regulated qualifications. Trinity is also recognised by the Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

The Professional Performing Arts Diplomas

Background

In 1999, the Department for Education and Employment announced a scheme of financial awards in dance and drama to enable talented young people to access high-quality training, provided by a number of highly respected schools and colleges in Professional Acting, Dance, Musical Theatre and Production Skills. These awards are generally known as the Dance and Drama Awards (DaDA).

The initiation of the awards led to the development of new qualifications, devised with advice from members of the theatrical professions and the Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET) and Drama UK.

Trinity is the awarding body for these qualifications, which are moderated and assessed by experienced working actors, dancers and directors.

The Professional Performing Arts Diplomas were designed to fit around already well-established and highly successful courses in vocational training. The new qualifications were 'added on to' or 'integrated within' existing programmes of study, but in order to deliver the new qualifications, Course Providers underwent a process of validation to ensure the qualifications were delivered to the appropriate standard. The validation process continues to focus on how **existing** courses fit into Trinity's requirements, rather than the other way around.

Aim of validation

The validation process aims to ensure that Course Providers are able to deliver relevant courses at the high professional performance standard required for students to achieve Professional Performing Arts Diplomas. Course Providers are normally validated for three years. After this period Course Providers are subject to a re-validation procedure by Trinity. If the course is re-validated, the term of validation will be stated; it may range from one to six years, and conditions for re-validation may be made.

Status of Course Providers

All current Course Providers have been validated by Trinity to deliver one or more of the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas. Validated Course Providers are considered to be providing training of the highest quality for the performing arts professions.

This handbook is a detailed guide to the process that any course applying for validation will be subjected to by Trinity. It sets out the procedures by which Course Providers must demonstrate their ability to conduct programmes leading to the following qualifications:

- ▶ Level 6 Diploma in Professional Dance
- ▶ Level 6 Diploma in Professional Acting
- ▶ Level 6 Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre
- ▶ Level 5 Diploma in Professional Dance (Classical Ballet or Contemporary Dance)
- ▶ Level 5 Diploma in Professional Acting

All colleges and institutions wishing to apply for Dance and Drama Awards for their students are required to

be registered for a professional course which has been validated by Trinity for provision of one or more of the above diplomas.

Trinity does not have any responsibility for the allocation of the financial awards, and becoming a Validated Course Provider does not guarantee funding.

It should be noted that a validated school, at their discretion, can offer courses leading to a Trinity Professional Diploma to all students in the school, whether or not students are in receipt of DaDA funding.

Qualification status within further education

Trinity Professional Performing Arts Diplomas are recognised by Ofqual at Level 5 and Level 6 on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

The Level 6 Professional Performing Arts Diplomas are the vocational equivalent of an honours degree, or year three of a degree programme. The Level 5 Professional Performing Arts Diplomas are the vocational equivalent of a foundation degree or year two of a degree programme. The qualifications are designed to prepare students for a professional career in the performing arts, and therefore the focus is on professional competence and knowledge.

The Diplomas are not degrees (honours/ordinary/foundation). They are vocational qualifications which are recognised by the profession.

The validation process – quality assurance

The validation process is undertaken in three stages and involves three levels of quality assurance.

1. The specific course

Assessing the ability of the institution to fulfil the necessary specifications of the Trinity Diplomas and to implement an agreed programme of internal and external assessment and moderation with Trinity.

2. The institution

Assessing the ability of the institution to provide effective, efficient and appropriate education and training.

3. Overall specialised provision

Assessing the ability of the institution to provide learners with the specialist training needed for employment in the professions of acting, dancing and musical theatre. This scrutiny is based on the criteria for course accreditation developed by the CDET and Drama UK.

In its validation process Trinity recognises other inspection and accreditation bodies such as CDET, Drama UK, Ofsted, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) etc. Applicant providers who have approval by one of these bodies may be eligible for a lighter touch validation procedure – depending on the evidence demonstrated in these reports.

It should be noted, however, that the main emphasis in validation relates to course design and implementation specifically for the qualification, rather than to wider institutional factors.

Additionally, the validation process is designed to be a creative as well as a standardising process, enabling the dissemination of best practice.

Ongoing scrutiny

After a course has been approved and validated by Trinity there will be ongoing scrutiny of the Course Provider and the course content. This is to ensure that high standards are maintained, and that students continue to achieve at appropriate levels.

Throughout the delivery period of the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas, Trinity will ask assessors to comment on the work of the provider's assessment and course content.

It is the ongoing role of Trinity assessors to highlight areas of good practice, and raise areas of concern. Assessors' comments regarding good practice, areas of concern, and any other matters form part of

moderation and assessment reports, copies of which are retained by Trinity and sent to the Course Provider. Where key issues (positive and negative) are identified in these reports, they will be discussed with the Course Provider by Trinity.

Note: Validated Course Providers once validated are expected to register students for the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas in the next academic year and in each and every year while they are validated. Trinity reserves the right to reconsider the validated status of that organisation if students are not registered.

Section 2 – Obtaining validation

Introduction

The aim of the validation process is to ensure that candidates for the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas receive the necessary tuition, support and assessment to attain the level of performance necessary to achieve the Diplomas.

Trinity only validates courses after a rigorous process during which written course proposals and documentation are scrutinised by Trinity's validation team and negotiated with the Course Provider, and discussed constructively and in detail during a validation visit by Trinity.

The course provision and design, while remaining the primary responsibility of each institution, must meet Trinity's specified criteria. Validation also ensures that through internal and external assessment each course leads to valid external certification of achievement at a high standard.

The work of Trinity assessors is overseen by a team of senior assessors chaired by the head of department. This team moderates and standardises assessors work and reviews and quality assures provision.

Validation by Trinity relates solely to the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas listed above and does not bestow any general credentials on the college/institution providing the course.

The three stages of validation

The process

There are three stages of validation by Trinity in order to become a Validated Course Provider. This three-stage process provides support and feedback in order to ensure that courses of study meet the rigorous standards required.

Note: a course must have had previous graduating students in order to provide the necessary graduate destination data.

First a potential provider needs to email dada@trinitycollege.co.uk expressing interest in being validated.

Stage 1: Pre-validation performance visit

At this stage Trinity will send an assessor to see a final year performance at the end of the students' course to assess whether students at the applicant college/institution are reaching the required performance standard to graduate with the Diploma that they wish to provide.

Following this a short report will be sent to the school with advice and recommendations and the decision whether or not the potential provider is, in Trinity's view, in a position to proceed.

If, following this visit, Trinity believes that the college/institution could potentially become a Course Provider they will suggest that the college/institution apply for a one-day pre-validation visit to their premises.

Stage 2: Pre-validation provider visit

This is the first level of in-depth scrutiny.

A mutually agreeable date is set between the applicant college/institution and Trinity for a pre-validation visit by the validation team.

This is normally a one day visit when the Trinity team observes classes and talks to senior staff.

Before the visit they will also require:

- ▶ course timetables
- ▶ course descriptions
- ▶ staff CVs
- ▶ publicity or PR material and a prospectus
- ▶ destination data for graduates over the past three years
- ▶ assessment systems and methods
- ▶ any relevant reports from Ofsted, CDET, Drama UK or similar organisations, and any other external reports or business plans.

The college/institution may also wish to produce evidence to support the necessary quality assurance in respect of institutional data and its overall specialised provision.

In preparation for validation of a specific course by Trinity the college/institution may wish to discuss the specific learning and assessment specifications for the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas as they apply to the course they currently offer, and how this course would need to be adapted and/or developed to meet the necessary requirements of validation.

Documentary evidence, Ofsted reports, and endorsements and approvals from organisations and individuals in the professions, including national bodies such as CDET and Drama UK, could be submitted at this point to support the institution's application.

Report on Stage 2

This pre-validation visit will result in a short report on the standard of students in all three years in relation to the qualification that the college/institution wishes to provide. It will also look broadly at the standard of staff teaching, the course structure, assessment and the overall ability of the college/institution to provide the qualification.

The pre-validation visit is an opportunity for any college/institution to establish from Trinity what, if any, areas within the college/institution need attention before they apply for full validation.

The report will recommend what actions the college/institution needs to take to meet the requirements for Trinity validation of its courses. Once any action suggested by Trinity has been taken by the applicant college/institution they may formally apply for validation

Stage 3: Full validation visit

A formal application and proposal for validation now needs to be made requesting validation.

At this point, having gone through stages 1 and 2, it is hoped that the college/institution is well prepared for validation and that this will be a smooth process leading to a satisfactory outcome for all. However implementation of the full validation visit does not guarantee validation.

A mutually agreeable date is set between the applicant college/institution and Trinity for a visit by the validation team.

The validation team

The Trinity validation team will generally consist of the head of department plus at least two senior assessors, selected on the basis of the particular specialisation(s) under scrutiny. The name of the senior assessor(s) will be announced to the institution in advance of the visit and the institution may raise an objection to the choice of senior assessor, giving reasons for the objection. Trinity's second choice of senior assessor will be final. Trinity will not propose as a member of the validation team anyone who has had a direct professional or financial interest in the potential college/institution.

The validation visit

Trinity will advise the college/institution of the documentary evidence to be provided in advance of the visit. A checklist of evidence to be made available and people to be met can be found at the end of this booklet.

The visit will take place at a time when the college/institution is fully active. The visit will normally comprise no less than three assessors for one full working day and no more than three assessors for three full working days, depending on the range of activities to be scrutinised and the extent of prior evidence supplied that is deemed relevant. It is at the discretion of the validation team to request a preliminary and/or follow-up visit wherever necessary to ensure an efficient and a fully informed report.

Summary of procedures for initial validation

Trinity will provide, on request, details of validation requirements to Course Providers applying for validation, with related papers and fee details.

Course Providers will send Trinity the required information and a letter stating that they formally request to be validated and the name of the qualification they wish to be validated to provide. Course Providers are encouraged to contact Trinity for prior discussion on the requirements in advance of applying for validation.

Trinity will acknowledge the documentation and provide the Course Provider with initial comments on this, if it is thought necessary.

The validation visit will be planned and agreed by both parties.

Payment for the validation will be required before the visit takes place.

There will be feedback from the validation visit before a full validation report is prepared and sent to the Course Provider, setting out the findings of the validation team. The provider will generally receive this within four weeks of the validation visit after payment has been received.

The validation visit

Information to be made available

Trinity requires the following information to be made available during the validation visit:

- ▶ course outline and description
- ▶ assessment procedures and criteria
- ▶ graduate destination data for a minimum of the past three years
- ▶ audition and interview procedures
- ▶ teachers' CVs/biographies
- ▶ quality assurance documents, including appeals and all policies (e.g. health and safety, grievance etc.)
- ▶ management structure of the organisation
- ▶ information on student support and guidance.

Validation scrutiny

During the validation visit the Trinity team will look at the following areas of provision:

- ▶ student attainment and progress
- ▶ teaching, learning and assessment
- ▶ the course structure and content
- ▶ ability to provide the qualification
- ▶ student support and guidance
- ▶ resources
- ▶ leadership and management, including quality assurance processes.

During the validation visit the team will wish to do the following:

- ▶ scrutinise documentation
- ▶ meet with students, teachers and course leaders
- ▶ observe classes
- ▶ undertake a tour of the provision
- ▶ organise a range of meetings with staff and students (e.g. course leaders, teachers, pastoral care, head teacher, students etc.).

For the full checklist of evidence please see the end of this document.

Feedback

It is an aim that the validation procedure is transparent and therefore holds 'no surprises' for the potential provider. The applicant must nominate a representative to whom the team can address its needs and questions and who can organise the relevant meetings.

The validation team will require a private room to use as a base where they can review documentation and hold confidential meetings.

The validation team will give feedback at the end of each day of the validation visit which will highlight main strengths and areas for improvement.

The framework for validation

During the inspection visit, assessors will be looking at three areas as outlined above:

- ▶ the institution
- ▶ specialised provision
- ▶ course specific information.

Under these broad headings Trinity will need to ask and observe the following:

- ▶ observe performance, rehearsals and practice sessions
- ▶ interview staff
- ▶ inspect and observe facilities and systems in place, course specifications etc.
- ▶ review endorsement and approval from appropriate organisations and individuals in the profession, including national bodies such as the Council for Dance Education and Training and Drama UK.

Trinity will report on the college/institution's strengths and weaknesses and the evidence shown by them (from professional feedback and course documentation) to assess the ability to provide the qualification.

Breakdown of the validation inspection framework

1. Achievements and standards

- ▶ are standards consistently high across the provider's work?
- ▶ does the college/institution give students sufficient and appropriate opportunities to perform?
- ▶ are performances continually improving or are they maintained at a very high standard?
- ▶ does the college/institution prepare students effectively for participation in the world of work relevant to their course of study?
- ▶ do the students progress to good quality employment?

Do students:

- ▶ make sufficient progress towards their goals and towards fulfilment of their potential?
- ▶ develop lifelong learning skills and the capacity to work independently and within a team?
- ▶ reach appropriate levels of key skills by the final year of training (i.e. to Trinity Diploma level)?
- ▶ attend regularly and are they punctual?
- ▶ develop skills of critical analysis, research and independent learning?

2. Teaching training, learning and assessment

Does the Course Provider take steps to ensure that assessment is used to monitor and inform students about their progress and how they might develop further?

Trinity assessors will look at:

- ▶ forms of assessment and their appropriateness
- ▶ fairness, accuracy and regularity of assessment
- ▶ initial assessment and whether it forms a basis to plan a programme of work
- ▶ records of achievement and accreditation
- ▶ how assessment is used to guide course development
- ▶ whether the assessment, verification and moderation procedures follow Trinity requirements
- ▶ information given to parents, employers and others with a legitimate interest in the student's progress
- ▶ whether assessment falls in line with Trinity requirements.

Do the teachers show technical competence and up-to-date expertise at a level consistent with effective teaching, training and assessment of the course programmes?

Trinity assessors will look at whether teachers:

- ▶ plan effectively with clear objectives understood by all their students
- ▶ use methods and styles of teaching and training consistent with the aims of the course, the provision of the Trinity Diploma(s) and learners' personal objectives
- ▶ challenge and inspire learners
- ▶ set, use and mark assignments and other tasks in a way that ensures student progress
- ▶ work with learners to develop individual learning plans informed by initial assessment that is reviewed and updated regularly
- ▶ promote working relationships that foster learning
- ▶ use materials and teaching methods that promote equality of opportunity in learning.

Do students:

- ▶ acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to develop their ideas and increase their understanding?
- ▶ understand and have confidence in what they do, how they progress and what they need to do to succeed?
- ▶ demonstrate that they are stimulated by and interested in their work?

3. How well do courses and resources meet the interests of learners?

Assessors will look at whether the Course Provider gives learners access to:

- ▶ a curriculum which is planned and managed effectively to provide coherence and progression
- ▶ a programme which takes into account employers' needs
- ▶ an appropriate range of courses to achieve suitable qualifications
- ▶ a curriculum which is socially inclusive, ensuring equality of access and opportunity
- ▶ a suitable range of enrichment activities to broaden their experience and personal development
- ▶ a coherent well-planned timetable with sufficient and appropriate breaks.

Under this heading the validation team will also look at staffing within the college/institution and whether there are sufficient staff to meet the needs of the programmes advertised and the students.

Assessors will review how the college/institution:

- ▶ provides and/or supports the professional development of staff to contribute to their effectiveness
- ▶ provides appropriate learning accommodation, specialist equipment and materials to meet current industrial standards and to support staff in good teaching practice
- ▶ maintains appropriate student ratios.

Assessors will also consider:

- ▶ provision of learning resources for students for effective independent study
- ▶ the safety of the students' work environment
- ▶ the ability of resources and accommodation to provide for full participation by all students.

4. How well learners are guided and supported

Assessors will look at the ways in which the college/institution supports students in terms of the below:

- ▶ support arrangement (i.e. tutors) and how they are managed
- ▶ careers education and guidance
- ▶ procedures to recognise poor punctuality and non-attendance as well as poor performance and how the college/institution takes action on these issues
- ▶ induction and how effective it is in enabling students to settle quickly and effectively into their programme of study
- ▶ the diagnosis of individual learning needs and effective additional support and access to support services

- ▶ sensitivity of guidance and support to equal opportunities
- ▶ effective personal support including access to specialist support services
- ▶ injury procedure and guidance policy.

5. How effective leadership and management are in supporting all learners and raising achievement

Trinity assessors will look at how the management and leadership of the college/institution establish:

- ▶ clear direction through strategic objectives, targets and values that are understood by staff
- ▶ targets for retention, achievement, progression and employment
- ▶ quality assurance arrangements which are systematic and informed by the views of all interested parties
- ▶ rigorous self-assessment which leads to identified priorities and challenging targets for improvement
- ▶ priorities which are supported by sound financial management
- ▶ information systems which meet the needs of managers and other staff and are used effectively to benefit students
- ▶ performance management, staff appraisal and review which are effective in improving the quality of provision
- ▶ explicit aims, values and strategies which promote equality for all
- ▶ effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including harassment
- ▶ effective procedures for dealing with appeals and complaints
- ▶ supervisory boards which effectively oversee the provider's strategic direction and their own performance
- ▶ use of 'best value' principles using comparison, consultation and competition in securing resources and services
- ▶ effective use of resources.

Timing

Stage 3 of the validation process takes a minimum of eight weeks. This is in view of the detailed discussion process that is engaged in between Trinity and the potential provider. It is recommended that any college/institution wishing to undertake Stage 3 of the validation process informs Trinity of their intent one year before they wish to start running the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas. This is because it often takes several months to arrange an appropriate time for the visit the college/institution.

Prospective Course Providers are therefore advised to submit the main body of a proposal well in advance of their anticipated course start dates to allow for the full validation process. A course cannot be promoted as leading to the Trinity Diploma(s) until validation has been confirmed.

Confidentiality

The validation process is confidential; neither Trinity nor the applicant may make any public statement until the process is complete.

No guarantee

Consideration by Trinity of a proposal, or instigating the third stage of validation is not a guarantee of validation. Trinity will withhold validation of courses that do not meet validation criteria or which are run by organisations that cannot assure Trinity that their staffing and material resources are sufficient to ensure consistent course provision as set out in their proposal. An unsuccessful outcome of the application process indicates that the course does not meet Trinity's requirements. It does not comment on the merits of the course.

Handling of queries

Any queries arising concerning the handling of a proposal should be referred to the head of department at Trinity.

Feedback

At the end of a validation visit, there will be an opportunity for full and open feedback and discussion on the visit, referring to the recommendation concerning validation that the team will be making in their final report. The composition of the feedback meeting will vary from inspection to inspection, but it will normally be expected to include the senior managers responsible for the provision.

The report of the validation team will be issued in draft to the college/institution for correction of any factual inaccuracies prior to submission to Trinity who will make the final decision regarding validation.

Notification of validation

No more than six weeks following the inspection visit Trinity will confirm in writing:

- ▶ **either** that the provider meets all current validation criteria: the course provision is formally validated and may be publicised as such
- ▶ **or** that the proposed course provision meets most validation criteria and will be validated subject to specific amendments: Course Providers are invited to indicate in writing how and when these amendments can be effected
- ▶ **or** that the provision will need to be significantly revised in order to be considered further: Course Providers will be invited to indicate in writing whether they wish to proceed.

The decision will be confirmed in writing to the director/principal or chief executive of the institution. The full report will be issued to the institution, and significant factors affecting the decision will be summarised.

The validation process is confidential. Neither Trinity nor the applicant may make any public statement until the process is complete.

Fees

Fees are payable. Institutions will be invoiced when validation arrangements are confirmed. Details of fees can be found on the website.

Where preliminary consultations exceed normal requirements, Trinity will advise the institution of the additional costs incurred.

All validation costs are to be paid within 30 days of receipt of the invoice and no reports will be sent until full payment is received.

Duration of approval

Validation is normally granted for a period of three academic years from the commencement of the academic year following confirmation of validation.

During the period the college/institution is validated, it is required to let Trinity know of any material change in circumstances. Material changes include:

- ▶ changes in governance or ownership
- ▶ additions to, or replacement of, key staff including management, directors of courses, internal and external assessors
- ▶ additions or deletions from the range of courses offered
- ▶ significant changes in entry criteria and procedures, group sizes or staff/student ratios
- ▶ major changes to premises including relocation or extension, particularly where these affect the space available for tuition, practice and performance.

A summary of progression to employment or additional education by the previous year's cohort is required, along with any new and relevant information on the employment or education record of previous cohorts.

Running a validated course

Once a course has been validated by Trinity it must normally start within 12 months of validation. Providers who do not start validated courses within this time must make a new full submission.

Supplementary visits

Trinity may visit a Course Provider at any time for an interim check, with or without notice, on any aspect of the course provision. A fee is payable at Trinity's discretion.

As soon as validation is confirmed Trinity will organise a meeting with the new providers' director/principal, main contact and head of course to discuss ongoing provision requirements which are set out in the Course Provider Handbook.

Changes to the course

Once a course has been validated by Trinity, the provider must submit to Trinity for approval, details of any substantial changes they propose to make to their courses. Such changes might include:

- ▶ major adjustments to the timetable or course content
- ▶ changes to teaching practice arrangements
- ▶ changes to staff – Trinity must be informed of the departure of any course directors and notified of their replacement.

Trinity's inspection component

Trinity believes that it is important for inspections to be carried out in a way that secures the co-operation and confidence of those being inspected. The inspection should make a positive contribution to best practice in every institution. This means:

- ▶ assessors are trained and well prepared for the inspections they undertake
- ▶ before validation visits, potential Course Providers are briefed so that the inspection process and their involvement in it are fully understood
- ▶ the time devoted to the inspection is adequate for the range and size of the programmes being appraised
- ▶ the validation is conducted in a way that engages the provider's staff, and keeps them informed of emerging issues and findings
- ▶ assessors will ensure that the views of learners about their education and training, and about the support and guidance they receive, are sought and considered as part of the evidence of inspection
- ▶ Trinity will keep to a realistic minimum the demands for information and other materials that they make of providers
- ▶ evidence already submitted and assessed for other statutory, professional or vocational scrutiny will be taken fully into account.

The conduct of assessors

The validation team will uphold high professional standards in their work. They will:

- ▶ be impartial and objective – this requires that they have no connection with the provider that could undermine their objectivity
- ▶ be open and transparent in the way they work, providing as much feedback as possible on the inspection
- ▶ carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy and sensitivity
- ▶ act with the best interests of learners as a priority
- ▶ report back to Trinity honestly and fairly.

The quality of validation

Validations will be conducted in such a way that:

- ▶ the evidence gathered from observations, from learners, from staff and others, and from documentation is sufficient to sustain secure judgements
- ▶ judgements are consistent with the inspection evidence, and overall findings reflect the balance of evidence and the collective view of the validation team
- ▶ the communication of findings, orally and in writing, is clear, well-argued, succinct and based convincingly on evidence gathered before and during the validation.

Continuing validation and withdrawal of validation

All colleges/institutions running courses validated by Trinity must comply with Trinity's validation requirements and the guidance as set out in the Course Provider Handbook. These constitute the terms of Trinity's agreement with a Course Provider and if they are breached Trinity will withdraw validation.

Withdrawal will normally be preceded by a warning and a period of time during which the Course Provider can make good the infringement of regulations, unless Trinity thinks it appropriate to withdraw validation immediately in the interests of potential students and/or Trinity's reputation.

Validation of courses by Trinity may be withdrawn for the following reasons:

- ▶ if the Course Provider delivers a course that does not comply with the course proposal as agreed with Trinity at the time of validation and as set out in the agreed proposal
- ▶ if requirements for changes to course provision detailed in Trinity moderators' reports and confirmed by Trinity are not complied with, unless an alternative agreement is reached with Trinity in writing.

Validation can also be withdrawn without notice:

- ▶ if the Course Provider does not settle invoices for validation, moderation and other appropriate charges in full by the due dates reasonably announced
- ▶ if the Course Provider is found to mislead or mistreat students in respect of their financial commitments
- ▶ if the Course Provider is judged to have brought Trinity's procedures, qualifications or personnel into disrepute.

Note: It should also be noted that validated courses that are not run during the 12 months following validation, or which are run once or more but not then run for a period of 18 months, will need to go through a full re-validation procedure. This will be at the Course Provider's expense.

Section 3 – Additional information

Sending in your proposal

To ensure that your request for validation is dealt with smoothly please ensure that your proposal for validation is sent out as requested by Trinity and that it covers the following areas:

- ▶ aims of the course as related to the assessment objectives published in the specification and course guidance documents
- ▶ objectives of the course
- ▶ environment and proposed target group
- ▶ entry requirements and selection procedures
- ▶ proposed course dates, length, frequency and class size
- ▶ course structure (including draft timetable with staffing and draft teaching practice timetable)
- ▶ tutorials
- ▶ course management
- ▶ management and tutoring staff: CVs of course director(s) and tutors, including date and provenance of academic and teaching qualifications, and details of teaching and training experience
- ▶ resources
- ▶ premises.

All Course Providers must satisfy Trinity's requirements. They must indicate clearly and convincingly how they will meet the criteria set out in this document. They must also expand the statements they make to show how they will deliver a programme that is appropriate to their specific needs, and how they will actually deliver the course in their own organisational environment, demonstrating their own special values and resources. Validation is a formal requirement and criteria must be satisfied, but it is also a collaborative process.

Proposed course dates, frequency, class size and course length

Course Providers must indicate the following:

- ▶ expected course dates including preferred first course dates
- ▶ maximum group size: Trinity recommends that the first course run by a newly Validated Course Provider to include not more than 12 students, and Course Providers should indicate the likely number. Payment for moderation will normally be based on a minimum of 10 per capita moderation fees. On subsequent courses it may be possible for the Course Provider to agree with Trinity a larger group size subject to availability of practical and staffing resources. Exceptions will be subject to further approval and scrutiny by Trinity
- ▶ minimum group size: Trinity does not set a minimum group size but recommends that a group of fewer than six students over a full course does not provide the optimum range of peer interaction and feedback
- ▶ number of hours for overall programme and for individual course components. Details of guided learning hours and staff/student ratios.

Contact hours

If Course Providers intend to run second or subsequent courses for more students than originally agreed in the course validation, permission must be obtained from Trinity and details given of the additional staff, resources and teaching practice classes to be taken on in order to accommodate the larger numbers.

Course structure

Course Providers must base their course content on the syllabus and the required specialist knowledge. Course Providers must include with their proposal a draft timetable for all course sessions and indicate:

- ▶ details of the particular areas of responsibility of each teacher on the timetable
- ▶ a note of dates for completion of and handing in of all/any portfolio assignments
- ▶ details of breaks (e.g. morning, lunch, afternoon)
- ▶ details of tutorials
- ▶ a brief rationale for the proposed timetable, demonstrating tutors' understanding of the complementary nature of the different units and components.

Course Providers must add a separate note itemising:

- ▶ the number of learning hours allocated to each course component/topic area
- ▶ the number of staff hours allocated for supervised or teacher contact time.

Trinity appreciates that the draft timetable may be subject to some changes once implemented, but considers it essential that Course Providers should think through the course delivery process very carefully prior to validation.

Course Providers must bear in mind the relevance of each component to others and the likely logical progression through the components.

During tutorials students must be given a clear indication if it seems at all likely that they will not meet the final required standards and not therefore be awarded a Diploma.

Students may have issues of a personal nature to discuss, as relevant to their training, and should be given the opportunity to do so.

Course Providers must ensure that a written summary of the tutorial discussion is made available to students and preferably signed by teachers and tutors following each discussion, whether or not the teacher accepts the tutor's recommendations or suggestions.

Course Providers are required to provide details of the assessment procedures for each component of the course.

Marking schemes must be based on the assessment criteria which are described in the guidance document for the Course Providers.

Course management

Course Providers must make clear who is responsible for the overall management of the organisation, whether independent school, college or university (at institutional and departmental level). This should include brief details of:

- ▶ regulations relating to disciplinary offences by students: in the case of a serious contravention of a Course Provider's disciplinary code, for example violent or excessively disruptive behaviour, it is expected that the organisation will deal with this under a declared and understood disciplinary procedure.

Course publicity and information for students

The proposal must show how the organisation provides comprehensive and clear information to its students. This must:

- ▶ reflect accurately the actual location and premises of the course, course content and timetable, staffing and other resources provided, and any other features of the course
- ▶ be given to students in writing before they enrol on the course and pay any deposit, or training or moderation fee
- ▶ include details of the assessment system
- ▶ reflect accurately and clearly which services, materials and tuition are included in the advertised fees, and those which carry an additional charge
- ▶ include details of Trinity's Academic Investigations and Appeals, and Complaints policies
- ▶ not include unauthorised or inappropriately used material bearing Trinity's name or logo.

During the validation visit

Clear responsibility should be defined for:

- ▶ course design at the validation stage and post validation
- ▶ recruitment of the course director and/or tutors
- ▶ teacher recruitment including interviewing
- ▶ directorship or management of the course: the course director (the person with overall responsibility for the course on a day-to-day basis) must be fully familiar with Trinity's validation and moderation procedures and be able to answer questions on these
- ▶ course tutoring in all areas
- ▶ course administration (non-academic)
- ▶ financial procedures, e.g. administration of course deposits and fees; these must be handled responsibly and in accordance with the published information regarding the cost of courses and other services, whether payment of fees is made by cheque, credit card or other means, handling of teacher complaints and feedback, handling of administrative and/or financial issues or complaints. The Course Provider must inform all students of the internal arrangements for handling administrative and financial complaints, and must give all students a copy of the procedures for handling complaints and appeals.

Induction of new staff

It is accepted that staff turnover can affect continuity of teaching standards. New staff should undergo an induction plan with the aim of guaranteeing continuity of service and standards. This induction programme should include:

- ▶ observation of the current course director and/or experienced tutors including their interaction with students
- ▶ observation by the college/institution of new teaching staff and feedback
- ▶ partial supervision of new staff until they are ready for fully independent teaching
- ▶ familiarisation with the Professional Performing Arts Diploma Course Provider Handbook.

Trinity must be informed when a Course Provider appoints a new course director.

Resources for students

Course Providers must give a general description of the resources available to students including:

- ▶ a suitable range of reference materials including professional Dance and Drama publications
- ▶ a suitable range of audio and video material and equipment
- ▶ suitable studio space, and music and film resources as appropriate
- ▶ some access to word processing and internet facilities.

Premises

Course Providers must give a general description of their premises in their validation proposal.

The premises to be used by students must be:

- ▶ sufficiently spacious for the number of students and staff to be accommodated in appropriate studios during classes: students will also need some quiet space and/or studio space for the preparation of materials and other assignments. One-to-one tutorials should take place in relatively quiet and private areas
- ▶ appropriately furnished
- ▶ adequately lit, heated and ventilated
- ▶ free from distracting noise
- ▶ equipped with sufficient numbers of clean and hygienic lavatories for female and male students and staff using the premises at any one time
- ▶ equipped with sufficient changing rooms for students to change for practical sessions
- ▶ equipped with appropriate and easily accessible emergency exits
- ▶ equipped with clear fire and safety instructions clearly displayed in all classrooms and common areas

- ▶ equipped with some refreshments, in particular drinks
- ▶ in a reasonable state of repair, cleanliness and decorative order.

Course Providers vary in the sophistication of their premises, but it is considered important that they all meet the basic requirements necessary to ensure a reasonable standard of comfort for students and tutors.

Health and safety

Course Providers are responsible for the implementation of local health and safety regulations appropriate to the venue(s) used. Trinity's health and safety policy may be consulted on application.

In the unlikely event of dance students under the age of 16 attending teaching practice sessions, special arrangements must be made to ensure that regulations regarding the health, safety and protection of young people are respected.

Special needs

Trinity College London is committed to creating an inclusive environment where candidates with special needs are able to demonstrate their skills and feel welcomed. Anyone with special needs who has successfully auditioned for a place on a course, should communicate their requirements to the Course Provider in order that their needs may be met and special arrangements made as and where possible. Students with special needs should also make their GP aware of the nature of the course they are undertaking and be prepared to present a clearance note from their GP approving their participation.

Special needs and Course Provider responsibility

Each Course Provider is validated separately and within this procedure the Course Provider needs to show that they are making reasonable adjustments to adapt their course and assessments to provide for students with special needs. Course Providers should inform Trinity regarding the special needs of individual students so that assessors are appropriately informed prior to visits.

Reasonable adjustments and special consideration

By regularly reviewing the way in which we provide our services, Trinity aims to identify the barriers or impediments to access.

Taking other inspection and accreditation into account

Where a Course Provider can provide evidence of other statutory scrutiny or accreditation which makes it unnecessary to provide a detailed submission for repeat scrutiny, Trinity will take such evidence into account. Examples in the UK include, in the public sector, QAA or Ofsted reports. In the independent sector this includes accreditation by CDET, Drama UK or other education bodies.

The validation visit – a checklist

Validation to offer courses leading to professional qualifications in acting, dance and musical theatre

Checklist of evidence to make available and people whom the team will expect to meet.

Section 1: Institutional data

- Prospectus, brochures, sample entries in reference works or year books, and other corporate literature
- Information supplied to students on entry
- Website address (if available)
- Evidence of ownership and/or governance
- Evidence of health and safety policy, environment policy, equal opportunities and other statutory and non-statutory codes of practice
- Evidence of first aid provision and accident and incident reporting
- Evidence of conforming to fire safety standards
- Evidence of insurance
- Management structure (organogram)
- Academic staff list with qualifications and experience
- Job descriptions for academic, non-academic and administrative staff
- Sample appraisal document
- Sample contract(s) of employment for full-time, part-time and hourly paid staff
- Sample student records (entry, registration, progress, assessment)
- Evidence of student welfare provision
- Evidence of procedures for vetting staff in charge of students under the age of 16
- Evidence of provision for student accommodation
- Evidence of complaints and appeals procedures
- Evidence of quality control and audit procedures
- Map providing the location of the college/institution, with information on how to reach it via public transport, or by private car, and where parking is available
- Premise floorplans and space/capacity statements for various purposes (management and administration, tuition, practice, performance, social) including other sites and locations used
- Any development plans for the premises
- List of academic learning resources available including print, audio and video
- In place of any or all of the above, a report from an external body (e.g. Ofsted/ACI,) which confirms that the above have been seen and remain valid at the date of this validation

Section 2: Specialised provision

For the discipline (drama, dance, or stage management and direction) within which the courses leading to the Professional Performing Arts Diplomas are situated.

- Course descriptions setting out curriculum aims and objectives (learning outcomes), approach and technique, modes of assessment, assessment criteria, participation/performance/production opportunities, qualifications offered
- Staff responsibilities including qualifications and experience of full-time, part-time, hourly paid and other contract staff; with job descriptions or definitions of assignment

- Allocation of staff hours, staff to student ratio, and other data indicating how teaching responsibilities are shared
- The timetable for the current term and two previous terms, including the programme of rehearsals and performances with details of locations and resources used
- Evidence of adequate learning resources including (as appropriate) print, audio, video, facilities for practice and performance and production, workshop facilities, IT
- Design of assessment including means of external assessment, with CVs of external examiners
- Class lists including entry profile (with approved prior learning), courses undertaken, pass/fail rates
- Evidence of contacts with the professions including employers, unions, associations, specialist media, with any corporate memberships held by the institution
- Help given to students to find employment, and employment records for students completing their studies for the three years preceding the year of the visit specifying work done and trade union or professional status
- Evidence of sound management and administration including data management (records of meetings, student records)
- Evidence via the media, reviews etc. of the public and professional perception of the institution and its students and ex-students

In place of any or all of the above, a report from an external body (e.g. CDET, Drama UK) which confirms that the above have been seen and remain valid at the date of this validation.

Section 3: Course-specific provision

All items in Section two specific to the courses leading to the qualification(s) within the scheme which are to be offered; with particular emphasis on:

- course structure including the proportion of compulsory and optional components ('units'), and the weight given to each unit in terms of tuition and assessment
- course design in terms of the learning outcomes for each unit and for the course as a whole
- course implementation in terms of approach, method and technique for each unit
- course content and learning outcomes in terms of key skills
- overall assessment design including the integration of internal formative assessment, external assessment; and moderation and parallel assessment by Trinity leading to the final assessment and certification
- records of achievement of past students in entering employment and progressing to further employment.

People to be seen

In relation to the above areas of scrutiny and appropriate to the section being appraised:

- the director/principal or chief executive (at the start of the visit: see letter confirming visit arrangements)
- the deputy-director/vice-principal
- heads of relevant departments or schools
- directors of courses
- head of finance and administration (Section one only)
- members of staff in charge of specific courses and course components (Sections two and three only) and/or directing performances
- librarian, technical staff including media and IT
- staff responsible for health and welfare, first aid, accommodation
- students following the programmes being scrutinised (all three years)
- staff responsible for audition, monitoring, internal assessment
- at least one external examiner.