

Trinity College London: response to the Arts Award Impact Study 2016

Trinity College London welcomes the findings of the Arts Award Impact Study led by London South Bank University. We are pleased that this study has demonstrated that the innovative approaches to pedagogy and assessment that are central to how Arts Award supports teaching and learning and enables a positive impact on the lives of young people from a variety of backgrounds.

Trinity's vision is that Arts Award is a universal qualification that is within the reach of all young people. We recognise the challenge inherent in promoting universal participation in a personalised learning programme, but the value Arts Award offers to individuals – evidenced through this study – makes this worth pursuing.

We have considered the recommendations of the report and make the following response.

Report Recommendations

Developing the qualification

1. 'Pedagogically, Arts Award is exemplary, keep up the good work: if it ain't broke don't fix it'

Trinity is proud to have developed a suite of qualifications which attract this praise. Trinity's qualifications are underpinned by strong beliefs about educational pedagogies in the Arts and English Language, which recognise that effective learning is constructed and realised by the individual. We believe that achievement in the arts in particular is not defined as a set of universal values of the aesthetic, and instead that it is understood in the context of the human, cultural and social values evidenced when art forms are brought to life through creating, observing and sharing them. On this foundation we have built our unique approach to student-centred education, self-mediated learning and reflexivity in the development of each young artist's practice.

2. 'Continue to work with Arts Award advisers to deliver Arts Award across a range of settings'

We have a well-developed adviser support service which helps advisers in all stages of their Arts Award activity from adviser training to moderation, including the Arts Award helpdesk, online resources and a range of face-to-face options and partner projects that advisers can join. We support advisers to map their arts delivery to Arts Award in a range of education, youth and arts and cultural settings working with a broad spectrum of young people.

3. 'Encourage depth of study, where possible, through all Award levels'

We note the importance of depth as well as breadth in increasing impact, and will consider how we can further support advisers to develop and encourage deeper learning through our Arts Award training, support service and resource materials.

4. 'Further investigate effective ways of delivering Bronze Award in large groups as part of a compulsory curriculum, improving the experience for young people and support for advisers'

There is [significant evidence](#) to demonstrate that Bronze Arts Award can be successfully run within large groups. However, we know that the quality of large group delivery, most often undertaken at Bronze can vary from centre to centre as with any teaching practice. However we will continue to work with advisers to promote and support effective delivery models and offer the very best stimulus to young people at Bronze level, for example our [Off the Shelf](#) series which includes [interviews with arts professionals](#) and resources for advisers.

5. 'Do not lose sight of art for art's sake. Consider developing the socially-oriented aspect of the Awards concerning skills for citizenship and social action and collaborative learning'

Understanding the intrinsic value of the arts and the contribution which artists make to society is integral to Arts Award's purpose. However we take seriously the socially-oriented skills developed through Arts Award and have already developed a [social action resource to highlight the potential here](#). We are also working with the National Citizens Service to embed Arts Award within their skills and social-action programmes demonstrating the role the arts can play in gaining key transferable skills such as confidence, communication and leadership.

6. 'Encourage and promote Silver and Gold Award to arts and cultural organisations with depth of study and access to arts professionals'

We are actively doing this through our [arts and cultural programme](#) currently funded by Arts Council England, working closely with regional Bridge organisations, Arts Council's National Portfolio Organisations and others. The programme supports the development of Arts Award across the cultural sector, including creating opportunities for young people such as meeting professional artists and seeing work in action through the [Arts Award Supporter](#) scheme and our youth website, [Arts Award Voice](#).

7. 'Inform Arts Award advisers on how they can maximise the impact of Arts Award'

We intend to share the findings of the Impact Study across the Arts Award community and embed it within our adviser training and support, focusing on how advisers can increase the impact of the award by their approach to delivery. Using the findings we will further identify areas of best practice and profile them through case studies and our [Where are they now?](#) series on Arts Award Voice.

Monitoring and research

8. 'Monitor recruitment methods to Arts Award to ensure a balance between compulsory and elective modes'

In the early levels of Arts Award - Discover, Explore and Bronze - it is likely that taking part in the award is compulsory for some young people. Trinity recognises that this is appropriate and practical for certain settings. However, following this recommendation, we will further support advisers to offer real choice within their delivery in order to respond to personal interests.

9. 'Better record and monitor the balance in numbers of Awards *and* progression through Awards, and develop strategy in relation to this'

Trinity believes that Arts Award offers a unique progression ladder in the arts, offering a framework for arts and cultural learning that can start at an early age and continue to 25 years. This progression moves from participation, enjoyment and learning about artists through to high-level vocational skills development and project leadership. Tracking take up and progression through the award levels is very important to us and we are constantly reviewing the data we collect and the ways in which it is analysed. As part of our tracking strategy we have launched a number of sampling projects where we track young people's progress through the awards and after doing Gold.

10. 'Make improvements in recording of ethnicity, and consider collection of other socio-economic indicators'

Trinity is very aware of the importance of accurate data collection about the young people taking part in Arts Award. We gather data at the point of registering young people for moderation and while we recognise the importance of gathering the necessary socio-economic and ethnicity data, we also need to strike the right balance so that data capture does not become unnecessarily onerous for the learner. Therefore as part of our tracking strategy we are developing sampling projects to collect more detailed ethnicity and socio-economic data in order to create representative learner profiles.

11. 'Further investigation and strategy development in relation to gender equity in take up of Arts Award including by level and art form'

We review take up by art form and by gender and cross-reference this against national benchmarks in the arts. We take care to offer a wide range of examples showing different art forms and gender participation throughout our materials and in how we are represented by our Youth Network and trainers. Following this recommendation we will specifically promote and support opportunities to increase take-up among boys and monitor impact through the sampling projects initiated through the tracking strategy.

12. 'Further investigation into the unconventional educational trajectories facilitated by Arts Award, given the potential openings for disadvantaged young people'

Trinity is delighted to be working with Bridges to support Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs) and hope these will provide new examples of unconventional educational trajectories which we can profile as case studies.

13. 'Development of longer term plans to maintain contact with Alumni and collect further destinations data'

In 2015 Trinity commissioned research into a potential Arts Award Alumni Scheme and during 2016, there are plans to pilot different approaches to an elective scheme that includes young people taking part in the award as well as those who have completed and are now in further education, training or work.

Arts Award aftercare

14. 'Continue to encourage progression through the Awards, but worry not as taking one Award can still have positive impact. Make information easily available to young people on progression opportunities'

We encourage advisers to offer progression routes to other levels of the awards for the young people they work with. Arts Award Voice, our youth website, offers a range of accessible information and inspiration for young people interested in the arts and doing Arts Award. Arts Award Voice aims to attract a wide online audience and offer them a pathway into Arts Award participation.

15. 'Support a 'Life after Arts Award' programme that helps Silver and Gold graduates heading for creative careers to further the skills they have developed through Arts Award in preparation for freelancing'

Trinity has commissioned Upstart Projects <http://www.upstartprojects.uk/> to run the Arts Award Youth Network and Arts Award Voice website, both of which focus on young people taking their Silver and Gold Arts Awards, and offer opportunities for skills development, project leadership and national networking. Upstart Projects is currently exploring ways of offering Arts Award alumni access to early career opportunities and benefits enabling much more direct peer support, helping young people to recognise and capitalise on the benefits of Arts Award.

16. 'Arts Council England or other funders should consider investing in projects to level some of the geographic inequalities inherent in the creative sector (e.g some twinning or exchange programmes where young people in more remote locations exchange opportunities with young people in urban centres, perhaps through Cultural Education Partnership areas)'

Trinity believes that there is a great opportunity to achieve projects of this kind through the Bridges network and Local Education Partnerships and is pleased to be working closely with Bridges to look at ways to embed Arts Award and in particular to explore ways of supporting young people in more remote locations to engage with Arts Award. The Arts Award Youth Network already creates opportunities for young people to connect across the country and will continue to develop these events and projects, with a focus on supporting young people with less 'cultural capital'.

17. Stronger networks of support for young people struggling to capitalise on the Award, perhaps developed through the Arts Award Youth Network

See response to recommendation 16

18. 'Further work to raise awareness of Arts Award amongst employers, but particularly among HE and FE admissions'

Trinity is committed to working more closely with the FE and HE sectors. In 2015/16 we ran a pilot project with FE colleges to explore how Arts Award could best fit their curriculum and needs and we are currently commissioning some further research on perceptions of the award across HE, FE and employers. In addition, we are supporting a number of Arts Award projects within HEIs.

19. Further and ongoing engagement with the creative industries

As above, Trinity recognises the importance of clear links between Arts Award and the creative industries. We have worked extensively with the arts, cultural and heritage sectors since the award was launched and we are now building links with the digital media sectors. We work with CCSkills and Creative Skillset as Sector Skills Councils for the creative industries and we look forward to building on these relationships as Arts Award enters its second decade and provides pathway routes for more young people into creative jobs.