Name of Provider: Academy of Live and Recorded Arts
UKPRN: 10000248

TEF Year Three provider submission

Provider Context

1.1 The Academy of Live and Recorded Arts' (ALRA) mission is to equip actors and theatre technicians of all backgrounds and ages with the skills fundamental to a productive and creative life in the performance industries, through the provision of a specialist vocational drama education for students whose primary goal is to work within this industry. ALRA is accredited by Council for Dance and Education Training and a member of Federation of Drama Schools.

1.2 ALRA deliberately seeks applications from those students who generally would not access higher education. We have developed a robust outreach programme and our admission policies are geared for students to enter Higher Education level provision with non-traditional and often non-academic routes. The creation of a non-academic admission process has been undertaken over the last two years and this allows the innovative use of digital environments to accelerate the critical and evaluative potential of our candidates. This admission methodology was mentored by our validating body St. Marys Twickenham University and represents the strength of our relationship and co-faciliation of widening participation at ALRA through the deep exploration of HE policy that occurs on a regular basis.

1.3 The shift in this admission policy is geared around the growing focus of the school towards recruiting those who not only face a social and/or economic barrier to conservatoire training but also to training in general. Our bourgeoning partnership with Leicester College creating a fast track BA Acting Creative Performance Practice and evolving partnership with agencies that create access for those not normally able to access education.

1.4 In 2013, ALRA won the prestigious Drama School Of The Year award from 'The Stage'**.** ALRA North was The Stage 100 Awards 2013 School of the Year.

1.5 The 2016/2017 academic year was the first year ALRA took part in the National Student Survey, achieving 93.33% student satisfaction, placing us in the top 3 Drama Schools in the country and the highest in London. In autumn 2017 ALRA had a successful QAA Higher Education Review (Alternative Provider), receiving just one recommendation.

1.6 ALRA's investment in staff development is prioritised to increase the quality and currency of the student experience. Our institutional engagement in the teaching and learning opportunities for staff have significantly increased over the last three years as we seek to improve our work. All staff take part in pedagogic, governance focused and artistic training to widen their currency as practitioners and engage them with the most relevant thinking and 'doing' in the industries we precipitate. Recent examples of this include institutional training with the HEA, whole staff body engagement in fellowship with completion scheduled for 2018, Feldenkrias and the actor training, Mental Health First Aid training, Actor Movement symposiums and peer leadership development with Bimm Arts ltd. We have a number of staff training on doctoral and masters level study as well as opportunities to develop their own practice as part of our research department.

1.7 ALRA currently has 187 students on our BA Acting programme and 38 students on the MA Professional Acting programme. In September 2018 ALRA will launch its new MA Directing programme, with 4-6 students in its first year.

1.8 In 2018 ALRA will continue to tackle diversity in British Theatre with 2 conferences held North and South. As part of our emergent research & scholarly practice ALRA Principal Adrian Hall is working with Dr Naomi Hynd, HCPC registered Clinical Psychologist, Dramatherapist, Neuropsychologist; currently working on promoting wellbeing in the mental

health of actors and performers. This collaboration will see the Principal publishing a book in 2018/19 and starts with a lecture in March at University College London co-presenting with Dr Kirsty Kennedy, Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Psychotherapist on the mental health of actors and performers. ALRA has signed the MHFA Charter and provides equal numbers of mental health and physical health first aiders.

1.9 ALRA considers Student Partnership an integral part of how we operate, throughout this submission our Lead Student Representative (the equivalent of a Students' Union Sabbatical Officer) has provided specific additional comments as well as co-authoring this report.

1.10 Enhancement around employability is a strategic theme within the academy seen in many features of our programme delivery. Over the past two years we have organised Gala events driving in agents and casting directors from London and Manchester to our slightly hard to reach sites. The Gala consists of seeing level 6 and 7 productions and the impact of this has been a doubling in talent agent management for our students and a rise in the quality of the employment of all graduates. This has included two successful Broadway castings in the last year, arguably the top tier of recorded media employment.

1.11 Studying at ALRA places learners at the heart of their practice. Rather than teach a certain methodology, we ask them to find their own, guiding their learning through intense reflection, evaluation and experience. From day one the actor engages in the skills of body, voice and imagination and their reflection on the value of these fields as intersecting and equivocal to prudent characterisation. As they systematically progress through more complex recorded media and live performance opportunities the students reflect on their value, their offer and their place in the industry and indeed the world around them. Our graduates are empathetic, open and connected to a view that is wider than the academy, wider than their culture and authentically engaged with their craft.

1.12 This report provides a narrative for ALRA's performance against the factors considered as part of the TEF.

Teaching Quality

2.1 Throughout 2016 and 2017 we have engaged in a whole school curriculum review as part of our ongoing validation process with St. Mary's University. In 2017 we have formed focus groups with students exploring the pedagogic rationale behind assessment and module content. The focus groups consisted of each year group of students on both campuses engaging in a meeting that described the module changes and asked for feedback and approval. These meetings have centred around the reduction of assessment, engagement with digital environments and more formal engagement with research as an authentic assessment activity.

2.2 The students responded well to the idea that the academic literacies within the subject specialism of acting were more suited to blog, v-log and pod cast submissions as ways of developing the sense of evaluation and reflexivity required of actors in the 21st Century. Adhering to tariffs informed by the guidelines of FHEQ level specific characteristics the assessment of the critical and reflective skills required of our graduates has been tailored entirely away from the traditional essay based submissions. The student response to this has been phenomenal, creating a sense of ownership of the assessment and a deeply engaged student body in an area that was previously described by the External Examiner as lacking in academic rigour.

2.3 Modelled on our existing Practical Research Project at Level 7 the replacement of the written submission Independent Project at Level 6 with an authentic assessment modality, including the use of peer feedback, has been received warmly by the students. Placing the summation of their practical skills into the real-world exploration of the creation of a film, theatre or audio performance has again, evolved into a culture of enthusiasm and curiosity.

2.4 The reduction of assessment has roughly averaged 70% across the curriculum which has reduced the stress placed on the Programme Teams and Student Cohorts. Our QAA report recently noted that this reduction was 'clear alignment to the learning outcomes'.

Comment from the LSR
ALRA's revision of both the BA and MA curriculums to replace the more traditional essay submissions with blogs, v-logs and podcasts is an example of ALRA's constant commitment to providing cutting-edge actor training which equips graduates with not only the technical ability but also the reflective and reflexive skills required for a successful and sustainable career in the arts industry. This curriculum revision shows a conscious decision made by the school to cater for the entire student population, many of whom require support for learning difficulties such as dyslexia or prefer to learn in a more kinaesthetic manner, meaning written submissions such as essays are challenging. This decision is a clear indication of ALRA's dedication to continued engagement with students as key stakeholders, listening to student feedback via student surveys and focus groups and responding to evolve the course syllabus and student experience as a result.

2.5 ALRA is a member of the Federation of Drama Schools which requires an intensive teaching load based on the hall marks of a conservatoire training as outlined in their 'core principals' document. The Academy runs 36 hours of training per week for 24 weeks per year as well as 10 intense assessment weeks with no less than 12 hours contact time each.

2.6 One on one tuition is received through Body Lab and Voice Lab through Level 4,5 and 7. These tutorials focus on the physical and vocal skills required of an actor in an individual setting, often including the incorporation of imaginative techniques. At level 6 the Performance: Live module is supported with four hours of movement and voice specialist

input complementing the practice of the theatre director. This targeted provision is overseen by the Lead Skills Tutor across both campuses ensuring excellence across the staff pool and breadth of experiences that exist in the different regional influences. The impact of this work is to create graduates that connect to our ideology of body, voice and mind in two facets, firstly to be able to separate the techniques and correct/self-direct manually, but secondly to synthesise these techniques later in their performance work.

Impact and effectiveness of external examining

2.7 ALRA makes extensive use of its external examiner to ensure academic oversight and currency within the higher education sector. Perhaps unusual within the conservatoire model, ALRA is committed to ensuring the quality of its pedagogic design is cutting edge and referenced widely within the latest frameworks. Our use of the External Examiner is an integral part of our model of governance and creative practice. Dr. Sam Grogan (external examiner from 2013 – 2016) recently noted that he engaged in extended consultation:

'*particularly with regard to assessment design, frequency and scheduling, considering this from modular, level and whole programme perspectives. I was also contacted frequently [regarding] the authentic assessment process using digital platforms which I understand is now an inherent part of the school's assessment policy and practice.*'

2.8 The entire review of this pedagogical aspect of our curriculum was underscored by consultation with industry contacts which included email and live visits to talk through changes, the impact this could have on the employability of the students and the relevance of the curriculum alterations within these two years of validation cycles.

2.9 The impact of these consultations and nuanced work with external parties was an increasingly satisfied student body reporting statements pertaining to:

- Feeling significantly more prepared for assessment
- Feeling like the programme is more joined up in terms of modular coherency

Comment from the LSR:
From academic year 2017-2018 onwards, both the BA and MA curriculums have evolved to contain significantly less assessments, and longer pre-assessment periods. This modification of the syllabus allows students a greater amount of time and space to learn through their project rehearsal processes and technique classes, developing their own personal methods of approaching scripts, characters and finding truthful emotional connection to text. I believe that through this curriculum evolution, ALRA has realised a BA and MA syllabus which holistically prepares students with all of the knowledge, skills and practices necessary for commercial actors to possess in the 21st Century, yet still has all of the academic rigour expected of a degree or masters level course.

Impact and effectiveness of teaching observation schemes

2.10 ALRA has a robust formal and peer observation of teaching system, which enables and emphasises the discussion of best practice. The staff appraisal process includes reflection on feedback on teaching from students and peer observations. Learning from the peer observations feeds into the staff development programme's good practice sessions

2.11 ALRA's observation schemes revealed a desire to consolidate our knowledge of movement for the performer and led to the curation of an Actor Movement Research series in Summer 2017. The scheme worked with three world leading practitioners delivering experiential seminars over three days each. Lead Movement Tutors on both sites captured feedback and reflection based on their embodied learning and this is leading to a school wide

dissemination in our research days though recorded skype conversations and podcasts. The impact upon the delivery of the curriculum will be a developed ownership and advancement of the skill within the academy.

2.12 Our most recent QAA report identified that "the Academy works extensively with staff and students to articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices."

Impact and effectiveness of innovative approaches, new technology or educational research

2.13 ALRA makes use of blogs and vlogs to support educational achievement which are an important part of the learning experience and which reflect the dynamic nature of a conservatoire training. Students are able to access either the Manchester Library or British Library depending on their location, while the Academy subscribes to a range of online electronic resources.

2.14 The student portal provides direct online dialogue with tutors in response to their feedback allowing immediate online engagement with the process. This is a unique aspect of the feedback process that we have developed with consultants to positively impact on the students access to the Lead Tutors who can deepen their experience of formative learning.

2.15 Research enriched pedagogic practice occurs through the deeper engagement in the Personal Research Projects across the level 6 and 7 studentship experiences. The final Personal Research Project module undertaken by level 6 and 7 students at the academy rationalises the experience of the learner by creating a piece of work through practice as research. The pedagogic experience of the module requires individual work, peer assessment and supervision from a practitioner but working as a critical friend rather than as an enforcer of process - placing them on an equal footing to the academic lecturers they have been/are working with at ALRA. Feedback also happens verbally at three formalised stages in terms 2 and 3 with the Lead Tutors, Course Leaders, Vice Principals and Principal.

2.16 The student-faculty relationship focuses more on the partnership that they can build in developing the Personal Research Project (PRP), engaging in genuine creative activity to explore their concept.

2.17 The entire experience of the course negotiates the manner in which the student engages in articulating their practice in a way that empowers them to self-select the content of their learning. The academic frameworks created at ALRA allow for robust scrutiny of what, why and how they engage with these concepts, but essentially the build of the experiential learning environment is leading to a deep understanding of how they can work with tutors and professionals as an equal.

2.18 The co-creation of the content of the PRP/Personal Directing Project(PDP) offers the purest form of partnership between faculty and staff. These submissions form the research element of the BA and MA courses at ALRA and feature as a significant aspect of the cultural life of the school. ALRA adopts Cook-Sather's definition of partnership as 'a collaborative, reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualisation, decision-making, implementation, investigation, or analysis'. In line with that the students work with the Course Leaders to invent, lead on change, discover and discern artistic practice, synthesise complex ideas and champion the direction of the outcome of their research. We believe this collaborative pedagogic approach leads to the industry recognised empathetic and rigorous graduateness of an ALRA student.

Comment from the LSR:
The BA and MA courses encourage students to develop opinions on various acting methodologies and use these discoveries to inform their own practice as an artist. The PRP project in the final year enables students to conduct practice-based-research and in turn put the findings of this research into practice, developing those reflective and reflexive skills which are a key element of a successful actor's tool kit. Actors also learn to give and receive feedback robustly throughout their time at ALRA and are shown the benefit of critical inquiry within an actor's process and the development of their work.

The culture at ALRA is one of collaboration and equality, both student to student and between staff and students too. The relationships are adult:adult and the environment invites students to see staff as fellow practitioners/ artists mentoring them to hone their craft, rather than a teacher who is superior to them in knowledge, experience and talent telling them what they should do. This provides the platform for students to leave ALRA with industry connections, paving the way for future collaborations upon graduation. This collective way of working also allows the staff and student communities to learn from one another and gives every individual the opportunity to continue to develop and evolve their creative practice through this learning process.

Quantitative information relating to the qualification, experience and contractual basis of staff who teach:

2.19 ALRA is committed to continuing staff development, underpinned by subject-specific and educational scholarship. This includes membership of the Higher Education Academy of which all permenant teaching staff are required to have. Staff are financially supported to achieve qualifications such as masters and new acting techniques.

2.20 There are additional professional development opportunities through a Continuing Professional Development Scheme with funding for research projects by full-time, part-time and freelance tutors. All teaching staff are practitioners and which brings currency to the programme and to the vocational nature of the teaching, delivery and assessment.

2.21 A unique facet of our staff support mechanism is the use of Curriculum Evaluation Meetings which take place between all senior teaching roles and the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality Assurance). These serve as supervisory sessions for the staff to explore areas of practice in relation to organisational development, student experience and subject relevance.

2.22 The supervision is part of our scholarship and research department's ongoing exploration of the impact of using multi modal forms of reflection to improve teaching staff's engagement with their practice and satisfaction in the culture of the organisation. All members of staff receive this once per term and it is a separate scheme to the appraisal or management system, existing purely as an exercise in improving awareness and ability to engage in pedagogic design. Within 2018 this scheme is being shared at international research networks as part of ALRA's growing engagement in scholarship and embodied academic literacies.

2.23 Finally, ALRA has provided all teaching staff with Mental Health First Aid training as a result of staff and student feedback on this increasingly more prevalent issue. The intensity of the training in terms of hours and content require our staff to cope with exposure to mental health issues and signpost our students to the appropriate services effectively.

Comment from the LSR:
Mental Health is becoming a more prevalent issue across all sectors, not just in the creative industries. At ALRA, we come across and discuss mental health issues regularly, through the content of the work we are required to cover in the syllabus (i.e. undertaking a role which explores characters with mental health issues) and also because of being an educational establishment for individuals who undergo rigorous and relentless vocational training during lengthy daily contact hours, oftentimes during which exploring complex issues relating to the human condition. Knowing that all staff have undergone mental health training is deeply reassuring as a student undergoing this complex and challenging process. Being guided through your time at ALRA by tutors who not only understand the pressures of this environment on both your physical and mental health, but are also appropriately equipped to deal with it creates a safe and trusting environment in which compelling, truthful and life-changing work is cultivated.

Impact and effectiveness of feedback initiatives aimed at supporting students' development, progression and achievement

2.24 Feedback systems at ALRA are three pronged. Due to the high level of contact hours there is constant verbal formative and kinaesthetic feedback in the training schedules. Within induction schedules it is explained to the students that they will be receiving feedback in class in these varying methodologies.

Learning Environment

3.1 ALRA is committed to ensuring the learning environment for the student body is consistently being developed and improved – our commitment to that is reflected in our high scores in the NSS for questions relating to teaching.

3.2 ALRA's admission process is designed to widen participation, and to make the course accessible for students from a diversse background, with particular focus on learners who may not normally enter into postgraduate or even the Higher Education environment.

3.3 To speed up the embodiment of physical and vocal practice, one on one body and voice lessons are delivered throughout terms 2 and 3. These sessions target learner's physical and vocal needs with direct communication from Lead Tutors to the practitioners delivering this work. ALRA feels this is one of the hall marks of our Conservatoire Style of delivery, offering an hour of timetabled delivery per level 4, 5 and 7 cohorts.

Comment from the LSR:
ALRA is fundamentally committed to providing aspiring actors from all upbringings and backgrounds with world-class conservatoire training. This is evident firstly in the fact that ALRA is the only London drama school to open a northern campus, offering vocational training at a fee relative to the reduced cost of living. Through the admissions process, ALRA also offers outreach sessions at various higher education schools and colleges to enable prospective students to audition for drama school at a local location, taking away the additional travel costs auditioning at other drama schools brings. ALRA also offers the DaDa (Dance and Drama awards) scheme through their partnership with Trinity College London, which enables eligible students to access funding towards their fees and maintenance costs which they do not have to pay back unlike the traditional student loans system. The DaDa scheme provides many with the opportunity to undertake actor training which they may otherwise not be able to afford so it is an incredibly important scheme.

ALRA is also unique in its approach to providing 1:1 support in respect of specific development areas for students related to technique, such as movement in body lab and vocal technique in speech lab. This allows the learner access to tutor support on a specific area of development such as a particular sound they struggle articulating or a specific habitual tension they hold in their body. These are usually issues which are jointly discovered in a class/group environment between tutors and the learner but are most appropriately explored in a 1:1 setting. This weekly designated time gives tutors and students the opportunity to explore these issues in a timely way as and when they arise.

Impact and effectiveness of initiatives aimed at supporting the transition into and through a higher education course

3.4 ALRA provide tailored auditions for organisations such as Generation Arts and The Big House, who deliver high quality, free, accredited and non-accredited acting and theatre-making projects for young people in the margins in London. They specialise in working with young people NEET and who may be at risk or have experienced a range of social exclusion risk factors including long-term unemployment, leaving care, offending, gang-affiliation and homelessness.

3.5 Working with Generations Arts and The Big House, we provide access, bursaries and support for entry to training and develop young people in every way to prepare them for drama school, higher education and the world of work.

Quantitative information demonstrating proportional investment in teaching and learning infrastructure

3.6 We have made significant proportional investment into the following areas of teaching and learning with the following additional annual commitments, which when considered with the size of ALRA represent a significant investment from our annual budget:

£4000 – Actor movement research
£1200 – Research and scholarship stream
£16000 – Staff higher education qualifications
£4000 – CPD institutionally

Extent and impact of student involvement in or exposure to the latest developments in research, scholarship or professional practice (one or more)

3.7 The academy regularly engages leading professionals in seminar, lecture, workshop and directing opportunities for our students. Recent visiting professionals include Julie Hesmondhalgh, Simon Stephens, John Godber as well as countless other leading voices in the industry.

3.8 Our research and scholarship department has supported the development of a piece of new writing drawing on actors from intercultural backgrounds. These events have all been attended by students and therefore keep their knowledge and understanding of the industry current.

Impact and effectiveness of initiatives aimed at understanding, assessing and improving retention and completion

3.9 ALRA's Equality and Diversity in Curriculum Policy takes account the incorporation of students with protected characteristics in different assessment modalities and learning environments. When developing this policy, ALRA researched with students, recent graduates to understand the complexities of why students were likely to leave or stay in education and developed a strategy to reflect the values that our teaching ethos should be driven by. This steering group uncovered facts around language used in rehearsal, casting dilemmas and the process of sharing information amongst cohorts in a fair and open nature.

3.10 Working in partnership with the student body, ALRA created a Mental Health Working Group, which looks specifically at the teaching and pastoral mechanisms by which ALRA can make strategic changes to it's programme delivery to ensure that all students have the ability to succeed

Student Outcomes and Learning Gain

Evidence and impact of initiatives aimed at graduate employability

4.1 The vocational nature of the programmes is designed to equip students for work. The Academy has strong links with industry and this includes network events for students with industry agents, professional workshops and presentations and performance work in professional venues.

4.2 ALRA's mission is to equip its graduates with skills to thrive in the sector, over 96% of students are employed within 6 months of graduation, well above the benchmark.

4.3 However, we acknowledge that our Highly skilled employment is below the benchmark. Unfortunately, the low number of students in the splits does mean that figures are not always reportable and comprehensive analysis of DHLE data is challenging, particularly as DHLE does not appropriately capture the nature of employment in the context of Actors. ALRA's own analysis of graduate data demonstrates that in 2017 over 70% of our graduates were represented by agents within 6 months of graduating from ALRA.

Comment from the LSR:
Employability is a golden thread which runs through the entirety of the BA and MA course offerings at ALRA. Right from week one, students have weekly enrichment sessions in which we are taught about all aspects of the creative industry through talks and practical sessions led by writers, directors, producers, actors and ALRA graduates. These industry professionals are there to offer support, guidance and mentorship to students about the realities of life as a working creative artist. These sessions also allow all students to begin to forge connections within the industry which we are encouraged to continue to develop during the rest of our ALRA careers, in preparation for life after graduation. The contextual studies modules of the syllabus and other specific workshops allow students to research and access up-to-date information about routes of employability as a graduate actor and other key data such as how to set up your own theatre/production company, how to apply for funding to develop your own work and how to set up as self-employed and work out your Tax and VAT contributions. ALRA itself also aids graduate employability via the new curriculum, as this has created the opportunity for ALRA graduates to deliver certain modules of the degree, such as Contextual Studies 2. This is hugely engaging to see as a current student; graduates of your course understand better than any other person what you are going through during you time at ALRA and can provide those first-hand experiences of life in the industry after graduation which is a really valuable perspective to have access to.

Evidence of longer-term employment outcomes and progression of graduates including into highly-skilled employment

4.4 ALRA's graduates can be found at the National Theatre, RSC, Hollywood films, Brtish soaps, creating independent companies and within touring companies around the world. Recent graduate successes have included a Broadway transfer of Hangmen, Molly McGlynn's casting in Coronation Street and Denise Gough's Olivier Award for Best Actress. Furthermore, many students go on to set up their own theatre company, including Alex Roberts and Matt Holt who created People Zoo.

Comment from the LSR:
It is really exciting as a current student to see clear evidence of ALRA graduates successfully attaining work in a variety of different roles across the creative industry both within their first year of graduation and beyond. In the last year alone, we have seen graduates of ALRA land jobs in various theatres across the UK including in the West End, on prime-time TV soaps such as Coronation Street and Emmerdale, TV dramas such as Bancroft (ITV) and Guerilla (Sky Atlantic), feature films such as Disney's "The Nutcracker", "The Kid who would be King" and "Feud". Last year also saw ALRA South third year student Abbie Andrews win the BBC's prestigious Carleton Hobbs Radio bursary award; a highly sought-after prize competed for by final year students from the top UK drama schools. This award enables the winners to graduate from their final year of study having secured a contract with the BBC for roles within their upcoming Radio Drama season. ALRA is developing an established reputation in the industry for producing hard working, focused and employable actors whom other actors, directors and producers want to work with again and again. This is a fantastic springboard for students to build upon as graduating actors in the industry, furthering ALRA's reputation for the benefit of future graduates.

Impact of initiatives aimed at closing gaps in development, attainment and progression for students from different backgrounds, in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who are at greater risk of not achieving positive outcomes.

4.5 ALRA started work on outreach by referencing the Deprived Postcode information widely used by FE colleges pre-2000. This information provided a starting point since when we have annually reviewed and updated our outreach programme.

4.6 Currently POLAR4 is HEFCE's latest measure of young participation in higher education. It measures the proportion of young people who enter HE aged 18 or 19 between the years 2009-10 and 2014-15. Quintile 1 indicates the lowest participating areas; quintile 5 indicates the highest participation. This information will now inform our targeted approach moving forward and we expect to review outreach destinations during the current academic year. Part of this review will focus on the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) target wards which are those wards in England that have low levels of young participation and where participation is lower than expected based on KS4 (GCSE level) attainment. There are 997 target wards.

4.7 We have also chosen to work with the British East Asian community through 'Yellow Earth' and 'Yellow Academy'. Through this work we have demonstrated significant commitment to teaching, learning, research, administration, management, cultural diversity and widening participation. The collaboration between Yellow Earth and ALRA has been maintained since 2009. As part of our commitment to East Asian actor development, we have offered summer courses free of charge during this period. Yellow Earth Theatre was formed in 1995 by five British East Asian (BEA) actors; Kwong Loke, Kumiko Mendl, Veronica Needa, David KS Tse and Tom Wu. The company sought to develop work that would widen the choice and type of roles being offered to BEA actors at that time and to create work that brought together our physical skills and western drama school training to present plays that explored our own cultural heritage. Over its 21-year history Yellow Earth has worked with many of the best BEA actors, writers, directors and designers to create a wide range of award winning work from new writing to bold adaptations of classics; from family friendly shows to participatory and site responsive work. Yellow Earth also provides professional development opportunities for BEA artists while inspiring the next generation to get involved in the arts.

Summary

5.1 We must acknowledge the student's readiness for learning and understand what encourages them to make an effort to learn. Our Mission Statement clearly refers to our commitment to the personal development of the learners alongside their skills development. ALRA is a collaborative and supportive environment and promotes and creates an environment within which students thrive.

5.2 From induction; where students are given information about healthy eating, safety, living as a student, money management and anything else they might need to survive life as a student, to Graduation; through our commitment to support them in the early years of their careers, ALRA demonstrates the highest levels of care and investment. We have a range of strategies in place to help when things get difficult and any ALRA staff member will be able to direct students to the right person due to the extensive CPD training offered to staff (200 courses in the last 3 years). Our 'open door' policy provides students with easy and simple ways of accessing support from staff who can help them to resolve issues swiftly rather than allowing a problem to build up in isolation. These high levels of care, support and commitment are available to both staff and students; our nurturing community ethos is repeatedly noted at inspection, validation and review where our students always acknowledge how 'safe' they feel. This is an environment we have built through formal and informal initiatives and is something we feel sets our actor training offering apart from that of other providers in the marketplace.

5.3 Our professional practice is firmly rooted in development. The Arts cannot survive within each of us without nourishment gained through expanding knowledge and reflection. The student care offered at ALRA is as a direct result of information from potential and on course students and has informed our entire approach to audition, outreach, induction and retention. CPD at ALRA has included over 150 short courses, 5 MA programmes, HEA Fellowships and an Educational Doctorate. This is a staggering commitment for faculty and support staff at our levels. We believe that alone shows our level of commitment and engagement with the principle of student care, institutional development and educational excellence.

Comment from the LSR:
ALRA is a positive and supportive learning environment designed to enable students to be the best versions of themselves. I auditioned at other drama schools and chose to come to ALRA because from my very first audition, I experienced the highly supportive, autonomous and empowering culture, which was both unique and infectious. ALRA's ethos as an educational provider is one of true collaboration and constant evolution to enable excellence; the fact that I have been invited to co-author this report on behalf of the student body is testament to the school's commitment to partnership working and ensuring a world-class student experience.

Students are taken through a process during their time at ALRA designed to enable them to develop and hone their craft as artists and practitioners, so it seems completely congruent that staff are also taken through this parallel process of CPD during their time in the ALRA community too.

ALRA's philosophy on actor training is fundamentally centred around developing individuals both professionally and as a result of the experiential nature of the training, personally too. I feel very proud to be a member of the ALRA community and lucky to have chosen to train at a place where I know I will be supported, not just during my time here but for the rest of my career.