

# The National Film and Television School

## LEARNING & TEACHING STRATEGY 2023-2028

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## **PURPOSE**

This document articulates the commitment of NFTS to excellent learning and teaching. It states our principles, aims and the specific actions which we will take over the next five years in order to enhance the quality of education in the School, and will be used to direct our planning and practice.

## **CONTEXT**

The National Film and Television School was established in 1971 as The National Film School – the culmination of work by the Industry and government to create an institution to educate and train talent for the British film Industry.

In just over 50 years the School has established itself as not only one of the world's best film schools, but as a centre of excellence for television and games design and development. It was honoured by BAFTA with the 2018 Outstanding British Contribution to Cinema Award, the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher Education in 2017, and in 2022 it was granted its own postgraduate Degree Awarding Powers.

Learning and teaching is at the heart of the NFTS, the purpose of which is to nurture exceptionally talented people from all backgrounds, providing the highest calibre education to empower them to play leading roles in the future of the film, television and games industries through making and sharing the stories that shape our culture.

This strategy, aligned with the 2023-28 Corporate Plan, is designed to consolidate our global status as a centre of excellence by fostering talent, widening participation, enhancing teaching excellence, developing strong industry partnerships, and shaping new practice.

## **UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES**

This Strategy is underpinned by a set of principles that are enshrined in our educational practice:

*To nurture, develop and challenge the individual voice of each student.*

Each student brings with them a unique set of talents, experiences and expectations, and we provide an environment that enables them to develop their creative and professional identity. As such, each department and specialisation has its own distinct methods and outcomes, and each student has the opportunity to shape how they progress through that curriculum.

*To support students to marry inspiration with skill*

Our challenge is to enable our students to produce innovative work that demonstrates command of the intellectual, imaginative and technical processes involved in its creation whilst also allowing for creative alchemy to occur.

*To instil the value of collaboration and team work*

The worlds of film, television, and games are inherently collaborative. We stress at all times the importance of respectful collaborative work, and the creative benefits of different specialisms combining to make something greater than the sum of their individual parts.

*To encourage creative risk taking*

In encouraging students to push at personal and professional boundaries, we expect them to take risks. The freedom to make mistakes is an important part of the learning process.

*To value process as much as outcome*

The process through which students make their film, television and games projects is as important as the final creative product. For example, research, experimenting with techniques, developing ideas, and collaborating on a shared project are vital skills in their own right, regardless of outcome.

*To ensure students reflect on the cultural impact of their work*

We believe that the integration of thought and technique enables our students to appreciate the wider cultural context in which their work is situated, to challenge boundaries, and to find their voices.

*To promote diversity and equality for all*

We aim to sustain a community of practice where students and staff can be their true selves and learn from each other as they seek to meet their full potential. This means respecting different perspectives, developing empathy, and recognising everyone's value in the School.

## **STRATEGY STATEMENT**

The NFTS will ensure that it continues to deliver an excellent educational experience for all students, regardless of mode of attendance and delivery, that prepares them for futures of their choice. It will also be innovative and agile in the development of new courses and new modes of engagement, redoubling its commitment to widening participation and accessibility, nurturing talent, and maintaining responsiveness to present and future industry needs.

## **AIMS**

This strategy will:

- Equip students with the knowledge, skills and experiences to flourish and continue to develop in their future careers;
- Build on the work and reputation of the NFTS as a centre of excellence for practice-led education;
- Foster a culture which is inclusive, respectful and diverse;
- Identify and support opportunities for pedagogic development, ensuring that our curricula are informed by research and the latest industry developments;
- Ensure that assessment is inclusive, and clear in its design, communication and execution;
- Enhance the conditions for co-creation of pedagogy between staff and students.

**We will enhance our curriculum by:**

- Developing new courses, and new modes of engagement, such as part-time and blended, which meet students' and the creative industries' demands;
- Ensuring that new technologies and AI are assessed critically and ethically before being embedded in the School's pedagogy;
- Identifying and implementing new opportunities for research to contribute to teaching-excellence
- Fostering a culture in which the language and principles of pedagogy and assessment are shared and understood by all.
- Building new opportunities in the nations and regions by creating new production courses in our hubs in Scotland, Wales and Leeds.

**We will invest in our present and future staff by:**

- Enabling all staff involved in supporting students to gain an appropriate postgraduate teaching qualification including Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy;
- Providing opportunities for staff to enhance their understanding of their professional practice through sponsoring visits to international film and television schools;
- Providing an extensive CPD programme to ensure that staff have the requisite skills and knowledge to support student success;
- Supporting new teaching staff and visiting tutors with principles and practices of teaching and learning.

**We will foster a supportive community of learners by:**

- Increasing the participation of underrepresented groups in the staff and student body;
- Creating more space in the curriculum for reflection;
- Creating new opportunities for networking between different departments to foster respectful, responsible collaborations.

**We will ensure that students are able to reach their full potential by:**

- Ensuring that our student wellbeing services meet the needs of our diverse student body, helping students access support in a variety of different ways;
- Providing enhanced support before and after students leave the School by increasing their visibility to employers, strengthening the School's 'Ready for Work' programme, and providing personalised support through mechanisms such as mentoring, and coaching.

**IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The implementation and development of this strategy will be led by the Director of Curriculum, reporting to the Academic Standards Committee and the NFTS Board of Governors.

We will monitor the success of this strategy through:

- Graduate employment data;
- Assessment data;
- Progression data;
- The Student Survey;
- External Examiners' reports.