

<Creative Academy>

The Golden Thread The Creative Academy Quality, Governance & Enhancement Strategy

VERSION HISTORY (KEEP 5 MOST RECENT CHANGES)

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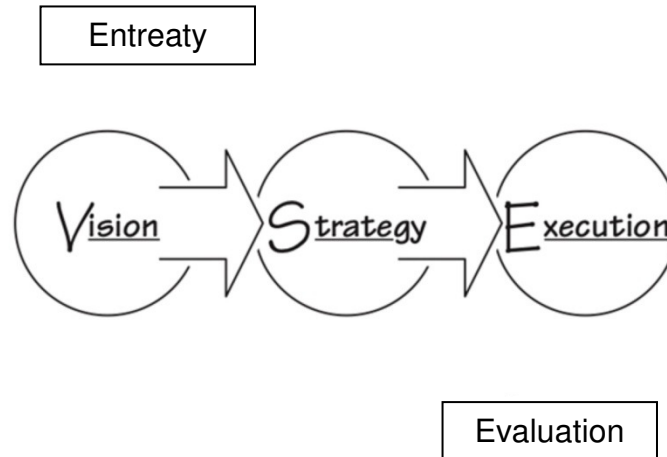
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The Golden Thread

The Creative Academy Quality, Governance & Enhancement Strategy

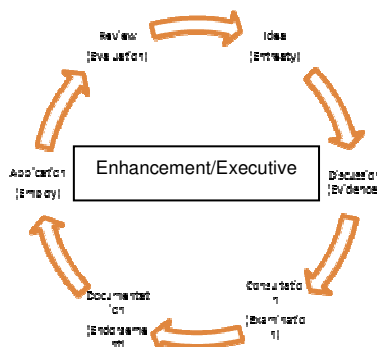


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The Golden Thread



Entreaty: An enhancement/executive function/policy will be identified by either:

- Informal/formal from Industry
- Formal from Steering Committee/QAA/OFS/UWL/Students/SBC/Awarding bodies/CDMT/EE

Evidence: The discussion will be identified and supported through various documents & meetings:

- Optional Module Evaluation Questionnaires
- National Student Survey
- External Examiner
- SBC 5 Year Plan
- UWL Ambition
- London College of Dance Network
- Dialogue with London College of Music
- Annual Performance Review
- Programme Leader Report
- Educational Scrutiny
- Steering Committee
- Degree of engagement with quality enhancement opportunities
- UWL Academic Strategy (Learning & Teaching)

Examination & Endorsement: Consultation of strategic or public documentation and application of idea: (*Dependent on specific document, policy and/or enhancement*)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Senior Management Team | • Comms |
| • Corporate Management Team | • Link Tutor / Quality |
| • Department Management Team | • Staff Teams |
| • SBC Finance (Budget Holder) | • Students |
| • Cabinet | • Steering group |
| | • CDMT |
| | • LCDN |
| | • OIA |
| | • OfS |

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Employ: Then discussion on implementation from consultation process (if documentation is needed dependent on change) or through UWL Quality / Validation process will form part of the Creative Academy Quality Cycle including Steering Committee.

Evaluation: Review will take place during annual quality review, Steering Committee Meetings, Scrutiny, team meetings, staff away day & Student meetings (Evidence will be in minutes).

Steering Committee

(Also see Terms of Reference, Public Information Policy, Social Media Policy, SBC Comms Strategy, Complaints Procedure & Quality handbook)

The development and enactment of key strategic focal points and policies in the delivery of FdA & BA (Hons) Dance – Top Up, learning and teaching, as determined from time to time by the partners including UWL & SBC.

Key themes for academic years 2018 to 2021 include those indicated in the team and student meetings:

- The improvement of feedback to students;
- Fostering confidence, creating an inclusive environment, developing aspiration and ambition;
- Prevent;
- Enhanced employability as a result of studying in a practically intensive and industry focused inclusive environment;
- Development of less teams;
- Ongoing industry engagement;
- Development of Steering group to include Senior CA Team, Senior Management SBC & UWL, Link Tutor UWL, Industry representation & CDMT or ISTD representation.
- Development of FT 2 X Senior Lecturers, PT Data Support Officer & PT Wellbeing Officer

An appreciation among students and staff of the high quality of learning and teaching in the Creative Academy and a shared ambition to contribute to their further refinement and enhancement of the programme.

As an organisation of educators and industry practitioners, our process of strategy formation should incorporate dialogue and learning from experience across the Creative Academy and feed into the UWL and SBC 5 Year plans.

In order to foster such dialogue, the following will be engaged in the process of governance & enhancement and auctioning its delivery;

- Slough Borough Council Chief Executive / Director
- Lead for Learning and Community Services
- Slough Borough Council Leisure Strategy Manager
- Quality Assurance and Business Manager
- The Creative Academy Manager
- Creative Academy Team Leads
- Director of London College of Music
- UWL Link Tutor for Creative Academy
- Chair London College of Dance Network

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- Representatives from industry
- Student Representation
- Steering group

The Steering group has a set of guiding principles (**see terms of reference**) by which it should ensure that:

- The Creative Academy is given strategic direction and oversight of the higher education provision
- Challenge the delivery of the higher education provision
- Oversight of regulatory framework and compliance
- Scrutiny of the Creative Academy Manager, The Quality Assurance and Business Manager and The Creative Academy while ensuring that the higher education provision meets the highest quality standards, clear management/governance and highest financial standards.
- Compliance with the various organisations involved in designation including the Office of Students

Thus, the Steering group which comprise of student representatives and senior managers at UWL & SBC, who have a vested interest in the delivery and/or outcome of the project/programme, will act as the accountable body for the delivery of various aspects of the programme.

The support that should be provided by the Steering group and its strategic decision-making responsibilities are obviously much deeper and broader than the scope of the management chain, although not designed to replace existing management roles.

In principal the Creative Academy methodologies and the role of the steering group within that structure are recognised as best practices applicable in any organisation, while ensuring compliance and open dialogue directly between senior management and students.

Their main function is to oversee and facilitate the Management Standards of the Creative Academy, acting as a project management group or key activities include:

- project management;
- agreeing strategic planning;
- securing and managing resources;
- marketing;
- scrutiny of higher education provision
- oversight of public communications & course information;
- monitoring progress;
- approving action plans;
- approving management reports.
-

Monitoring will take place through the Quality, Admin and Data Team partnered with Academic Team, who will collectively and individually maintain a focus on quality

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enhancement through dialogue with all those whose activities impinge in any way on learning and teaching.

The above will seek input from colleagues and student representatives, and will communicate developments on, for example:

- Promising practices developed in the Creative Academy in relation to learning and teaching;
- Work based learning and additional classes/programme
- Examples of blended learning and practical teaching;
- Student focus;
- Designation Activity;
- Added value;
- Evolution of the Creative Academy enhancement strategy and particular points of emphasis in learning and teaching that may be determined by the Creative Academy from time to time;
- New research into higher education developed both internally and externally; Benchmarking statements and exercises for the sector and for individual dance disciplines;

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Academic standards, quality, and enhancement

(Also see [Terms of Reference](#), [Learning Agreement](#), [Validation Contract](#), [Access & Participation](#), [Programme Handbook](#), [Disability & Quality handbook](#))

Enhancement is the process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. This can take place in different ways and at different levels, but a higher education provider needs to be aware that it has a responsibility to improve the quality of learning opportunities and to have policies, structures and processes in place to detect where improvement is necessary. Willingness to consider enhancement is embedded throughout the higher education provider, but stems from a high-level awareness of the need to consider improvement. Quality enhancement naturally forms part of effective quality assurance, and consequently guidance on possible approaches to enhancement is embedded throughout the Quality Code. Specific definitions of enhancement exist for the purposes of QAA's review methods. The Creative Academy is a student focused organisation and students are key to every and all developments, enhancements and strategic direction including participation on the steering group.

The Creative Academy's objectives with regard to Quality Enhancement are:

The improvement of teaching and learning quality and employability wherever necessary and possible:

in line with the Creative Academy's own high standards as established by all academic staff, inclusive practices, equality and diversity procedures, Quality Cycle and golden thread;

- in support of the University of West London (UWL) Academic (Learning & Teaching) Strategy & Enhancement statement; and in response, as appropriate, to Office for Students (OfS) Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) national benchmarks, The Council For Dance, Drama & Musical Theatre (CDMT) standards, Slough Borough Council (SBC) policies & procedures, other developments in educational policy and practice, designation activity and the student body.

Continual emphasis on bettering our techniques and offer to develop students as independent learners, to stretch their ambitions, realise their aspirations, improve their competences and to stimulate their enthusiasm for learning.

Threshold academic standards are the minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for a qualification or the award of academic credit. For equivalent qualifications, the threshold level of achievement is agreed across the UK and is described by the qualifications descriptors set out in the national frameworks for higher education qualifications.

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Academic standards are the standards that individual degree-awarding bodies set and maintain for the award of their academic credit or qualifications. These may exceed the threshold academic standards.

Threshold academic standards define the minimum standards which degree-awarding bodies must use to make the award of qualifications at a particular level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications. Threshold academic standards are distinct from the standards of performance that a student needs to demonstrate to achieve a particular classification of a qualification. These standards of performance are the academic standards for which individual degree-awarding bodies are responsible.

Individual degree-awarding bodies are responsible for ensuring that UK threshold academic standards are met in their qualifications by aligning programme learning outcomes with the relevant qualification descriptors in the national frameworks for higher education qualifications. They are also responsible for defining their own academic standards by setting the pass marks and determining the grading/marking schemes and any criteria for classification of qualifications that differentiate between levels of student achievement above and below the threshold academic standards. Student achievements will reflect the specific content, delivery and assessment of the programmes they have undertaken and this diversity is strength of UK higher education provision.

Academic quality is concerned with how well the learning opportunities made available to students enable them to achieve their qualification. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning resources are provided. In order to achieve a higher education qualification, students participate in the learning opportunities made available to them by their higher education provider. A provider guarantees the quality of the opportunities it provides, but it cannot guarantee how any particular student will experience those opportunities. By ensuring that its policies, structures and processes for the management of learning opportunities are implemented effectively, a higher education provider also ensures the effectiveness of its outcomes.

Management of Quality Standards within University of West London

Academic Quality and Standards - Academic Quality Office (AQO)

Vision:

- To promote Quality and mitigate academic risk in all its forms
- To support, monitor and enhance Academic Partnerships
- To promote and develop the Enhancement agenda across the University
- To effect positive change within the institution for and on behalf of students
- To liaise with key external stakeholders, including External Examiners, PSRBs and the QAA

Purpose:

- To provide monitoring and review support for all academic courses
- To support the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in strategic change in Quality Assurance

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- To support the Schools in their KPIs, for example NSS, Retention and progression
- To promote Enhancement and staff development in Quality
- To support Schools and Academic Partners in their joint activity

The following functional roles have a focused quality perspective. Training and support is provided for these roles by the AQO.

School/College Board

- Responsible for implementation of all academic matters within Schools including; admissions, curriculum, learning and teaching, assessment and examination, research and scholarship.
- Agree and monitor the School Academic Plan, including arrangements for the design, delivery and enhancement of academic courses
- Promote and monitor research, scholarship, enterprise and employer engagement within the School
- Promote and monitor the School's arrangements for staff development, appraisal and performance review
- Receive and comment on evidence relating to the School's management of quality and standards

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Quality Cycle

(Also see Quality handbook, Complaints, Student Protection Plan, Terms of Reference, Consumer Protection Law, Student charter, Learning Contract & Terms & Conditions)

The quality cycle:

- has been developed as a formal process for the confirmation of enhancements, policy development, teaching, learning and assessment outcomes at key points in the academic year (Expectation B6).
- it is linked to the universities quality, teaching, learning and assessment policies and is used throughout the year to ensure outcomes are being met and reviews of key quality assurance procedures annually.
- formalises procedures ensuring an effective oversight of key quality assurance processes internally and within Slough Borough Council, the Creative Academy and its steering group (Expectations B8 and B6).

Sept	Semester one Enrolments Year 1 Diagnostic Year 1 streaming Year 2 schools programme begins Year 3 P - film CDMT Meeting
Oct	Team meeting Education Overview and Scrutiny CYD Steering group meetings
Nov	Team meetings Corporate Year 2 schools programme completed
Dec	Year 2 & BA assessments Jazz and ISTD Assessments Auditions
Jan	Annual show BA, Year 1 & 2 Assessments External Examiner visit CDMT Visit Steering group Meeting Team meeting

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- Feb** Semester Break
Auditions
- Mar** JABS / MABS - Lead by UWL
Team meetings
Auditions
Year end (Finance)
Move It
Lesson Observation completed
- Apr** Team meeting
CDMT meeting
Appraisal (FT Only)
Subject Review (Performing Arts)
Resit progress
Year 3 Schools programme begins
Auditions
- May** Year end assessments
Steering group meeting
External Examiner visit
Team meeting
Performance Project 1 & 2
- June** Graduate Showcase - Sadler's
CDMT Visit
Year 3 CRB/DBS
ISTD Exams
Active IQ exams
MABS/JABS
- July** Steering Group Meeting
CDMT meeting
Team meeting
- Aug** Perp new AY
Team meeting
Away day & standardisation
Resit progress
1/2 year appraisals (FT)



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The diagram above gives an overview of the quality assurance and quality enhancement cycles that operate at the Creative Academy (Higher Education provision). At the heart of how we assure and enhance quality is student needs, aspiration, engagement and expectation, and these inform how we evaluate, plan, deliver and review the entire H.E. provision. Many elements come together to inform the work of the institute and to maintain our academic standards in line with UWL and the UK Quality Code (the full UK Quality Code is available at the QAA website: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code>).

Responsibilities:

The authority to set, maintain and assure standards is vested in the Academic Board of the University and different functions are delegated to a range of departments, specifically day to day delivery and management to the Creative Academy of the Dance programmes. The Academic Quality Office is responsible for the approval and review of courses and organising and managing the Validation and quality cycle process for both Courses and Modules, in conjunction with the London College of Music.

The Validation and approval process aligns with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (UKQCHE) Part A, specifically Chapter A3: “Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards: Design and approval of modules, programmes and qualifications” and Part B Chapter B1: “Programme Design, Development and Approval”.

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Review (*evaluation and challenge*)

(Also see Student Charter, Terms of Reference, SBC Annual Financial Audit, Quality Assurance Agency Higher Education Review, CDMT Annual Review, Quality Handbook & Steering Group)

Review of the activities will be undertaken through external and internal initiatives including; external: designation activity, CDMT Accreditation, SBC financial audits, QAA Enhancement themes and activities, the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education these are scaffolded with internal: peer lesson observation, staff appraisals, student representative meeting, team meetings, educational scrutiny, financial audits, steering group and Academic team review.

Together with SBC senior management & UWL performance team, the above will create opportunities in individual aspects of the Creative Academy programme, to share information about promising practice and quality enhancement in learning and teaching.

The Student Representation will collaborate with the Academic Team & Quality and Data Team partnered with others in UWL & SBC Steering group to ensure student engagement in quality enhancement, for example through the Learning Contract, Student Charter, collaboration agreement, engagement with feedback, and participation in the class and industry engagement. The Steering group representation will be led by The Creative Academy staff team, Student Reps, Director London College of Music, Link Tutor, and Senior Management at Slough Borough Council, *Elected Members or Member of Parliament* (Dependent on availability) and External independent practitioners. This will be directed by set and agreed terms and conditions. The Steering Group will take a leadership and directional role of The Creative Academy and ensure that senior management at The University of West London and Slough Borough Council meet and can agree any developments of changes with The Creative Academy policies and that student can engage fully with the leadership of the degree and associated programmes.

Examples of promising or good practice in learning and teaching will be collected during, for example, annual academic monitoring and Creative Academy Reviews of Learning & Teaching and scrutiny of higher education activity.

The Creative Academy's promotions process will take account of students' performance in relation to learning and teaching, and the enhancement of both. The Creative Academy will promote connections, with industry and partner organisations, wherever possible between modular and non modular aspects of quality enhancement.

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The academic monitoring process will identify areas of promising practice and areas for development in learning and teaching across the Creative Academy, and will ensure that these are shared and acted upon by referral to the appropriate organisations (dependant on data protection & Health & Safety)

The purpose of annual review

A process of critical self-evaluation and reporting is required of academic and administrative groups within the University, and of Academic Partnerships within which University students are taught. The formal reporting stages should be seen as a framework which promotes interaction rather than as an end in itself.

The Creative Academy will therefore carry out a regular process of self-evaluation and dialogue, leading to a series of formal reports. This will be undertaken for the following reasons:

- In the interests of public accountability, to demonstrate a continuous vigilance in the assurance of the quality of the systems and procedures and the assurance of Governors at the Validating partner in this regard
- To support a local authority & University culture of self-analysis and dialogue;
- To examine and report on issues of standards and quality which affect staff, students and other stakeholders;
- To celebrate and share best practice;
- To identify strengths and weaknesses with a view to sustainable improvement.
- Annual reports and Annual Reviews are evidence-driven; review events are based on the principle of peer review, including the participation of external subject specialists.

Purpose of Education Scrutiny and Overview

Slough Borough Council operates using a system where the Cabinet makes decisions. The role of the scrutiny system is to ensure these policies are rigorously examined both before and after they are made, with relevant recommendations being made to Cabinet, Council and external bodies on the basis of the discussions held at scrutiny meetings. Cabinet members are barred from membership of the scrutiny committees.

There are four scrutiny committees at Slough Borough Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the overarching committee, and looks at wider strategic priorities as well as matters such as Slough's budget. Three other panels investigate matters that relate to their specific areas of interest; these areas are indicated by their names.

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More details on these four committees can be found below.

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee
- Health Scrutiny Panel
- Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

In addition, the four committees may decide to commission a Task & Finish Group to undertake an in-depth review of a specific policy area. These will be time limited, draw up their terms of recommendations, investigate those terms of reference and then publish a report with recommendations at the end of their review.

The committees outlined above meet on a regular basis. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee meets at least nine times a year, and the other three meet six times a year. Agenda papers and minutes of previous meetings, and dates of future meetings are all available at the links above. All these meetings are open to the public.

This Panel has a monitoring role with a portfolio overseeing the following areas –

- All Education issues (including Adult Learning & Creative Academy)
- Children's Services
- Youth Services /Young People's Centres
- Youth Offending Team

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Value for Money

(Also see Refund and Compensation, Terms and Conditions, Learning Agreement, Student Charter, Financial Viability & Sustainability Statement, Student Protection Plan & Value for Money Strategy)

Transparency for students and public – including tax payers

- The Creative Academy is not for profit
- The Creative Academy is between £5K & £8K cheaper, per student (for the student) per year, than our competitors or similar courses/institutes and all student loans are invested into delivery of the Foundation Degree and BA (Hons) Dance – Top Up.
- The Creative Academy has 100% graduate employment or students going onto postgraduate training. Which is collected through HESA and direct at the Creative Academy from the graduates.
- The Creative Academy does not charge audition fee, which we feel is a barrier to young people from social or economic disadvantaged backgrounds, all our competitors and similar courses/institutes charge various amounts for auditions/interviews/application.
- The pay for employees at The Creative Academy is independently assessed by Hayes, and is in line with local authority pay scales.
- The Creative Academy undertakes quality audit from the Quality Assurance Agency (designation requirement) and opts for the Council of Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre, accreditation.
- Slough Borough Council has independent audited accounts each financial year and the Creative Academy has audited accounts through accountants at Slough Borough Council, with reports going to educational scrutiny, Academic Annual Review and the steering group.
- Budgets are set by the Creative Academy Manager and senior management inline with Slough Borough Council accountants and with overview from the steering group and line management structure at Slough Borough Council.
- Students are activity involved in the steering group and student committees where spend and action is openly discussed.
- The Creative Academy students work with Slough Sports Network and Active Slough to offer free dance and physical activity workshops in local schools, sharing best practice and encouraging local people to be more active more often.
- The Creative Academy offers very cheap and free dance and parkour classes to local families, children and young people.

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- The Creative Academy is a net cost to Slough Borough Council and these core services, including Human Resources, Health and Safety and facilities, are not funded by Student loans.
 - The Creative Academy with University of West London, Slough Borough Council and the steering group
 - Ensure efficiency and value of students funding and monies
 - Embrace innovation to ensure we are taking advantage of new technologies which are relevant to the current cultural and creative industries, ensuring graduates are best prepared for employment
 - Seeking collaboration to work smarter with other private, public and third sector organisations
 - Learning from the best practice of other dance institutes and universities

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Policies & Documents SBC vs UWL

SBC take priority <http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/>

Health & Safety <http://www.slough.gov.uk/business/health-and-safety/default.aspx>

Human Resources

Information Technology

Communications

Legal

Prevent

Safeguarding

Data & Data Protection [http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/data-protection-and-](http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/data-protection-and-foi/data-protection.aspx)

[foi/data-protection.aspx](http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/data-protection-and-foi/data-protection.aspx)

Finance <http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/performance-and-spending/>

Staff Development

Building & Facilities

Equalities (Equal Opportunities & Diversity)

Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy & Procedures

Data Protection Policy

Disclosure and Barring Service Screening Regulations

Environmental Policy

Equality and Diversity Statement

Employee Benefits

Health and Safety

Pay Scales

Prevent Duty (CONTEST)

Safeguarding Children Policy

Transgender Policy and Guidance

UWL takes priority <https://www.uwl.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-regulations>

Validation Contract

Quality Assurance of Academic Standards

Teaching & Learning Strategy

External Examiner

Admissions

Academic Offences

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Website: www.creativeacademy.org

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Creative Academy localised www.creativeacademy.org/faqs/

Quality, Governance and Enhancement Strategy (The Golden Thread) – This Document

Complaints – agreed with OIA

Work based Learning

Programme Handbook

Public Information Policy

Audition Appeals Procedure

Module Study Guides

Student Charter

Value for Money Strategy

Learning Contract

Student Protection Plan

Student Terms & Conditions

Student Refund & Compensation Policy

Access & Participation Statement

Disability Support & Wellbeing Policy

Social Media Policy

Public Information Policy

VLE Statement

Prevent in H.E Statement

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