Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

Joseph Priestley College

January 2011

SR 021/2010

Preface

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education. As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

Purpose of IQER

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

The IQER process

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

Developmental engagement

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college
- an optional written submission by the student body
- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit
- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days
- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education
- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents
- reviewing the optional written submission from students
- asking questions of relevant staff
- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*
- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects
- guidelines for preparing programme specifications, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study
- award benchmark statements which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential**, **advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.
- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence**, **limited confidence** or **no confidence**. There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published. Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's

management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body(ies) as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

Executive summary

The Summative review of Joseph Priestley College carried out in January 2011

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Good practice

The team has identified the following good practice for dissemination:

- the capacity and commitment of the College to engage in partnership work with awarding bodies and network partner colleges results in the effective dissemination of good practice and impacts positively on the higher education provision
- the effectiveness of peer support provided by experienced higher education staff clearly contributes to quality improvement, enhancement and the maintenance of a higher education ethos and culture
- the high level of student support offered to students through formal and informal academic and pastoral care systems, which directly impacts positively on their experiences and academic progress.

Recommendations

The team has also identified a number of recommendations for the enhancement of the higher education provision.

The team considers that it would be **advisable** for the College to:

- ensure that the Higher Education Leadership Group, Internal Moderation and Verification Group and Quality Leadership Team review their terms of reference, thereby improving the effectiveness of the quality processes for higher education provision.

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the College to:

- review its systems and procedures to ensure it is able to consider and evaluate the evidence available to enable the College to report on the quality of all higher education provision through the Higher Education Leadership Team
- continue to maximise the use of the College and University virtual learning environments across all programmes
- implement a regular check on documents published through the virtual learning environment to ensure that the most recent version is available.

A   Introduction and context

1   This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Joseph Priestley College. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of the University of Huddersfield and Edexcel. The review was carried out by Mr Chris Davies and Mrs Sue Miller (reviewers) and Mr Bob Saynor (coordinator).

2   The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook) published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College and awarding bodies, meetings with staff, students and partner institutions, reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment undertaken in September 2009. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice),* subject and award benchmark statements*, The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and programme specifications.

3   In order to assist HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree (FD) awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the FD programmes delivered at the College.

4   The College is a general further education college located in south Leeds. It has three main sites, but also uses a variety of community, school and employers' premises. It serves a large and diverse population in localities that are often characterised by significant levels of deprivation and unemployment. The College's vision is 'To be the college of choice for individuals and organisations of South Leeds', and the College mission is 'to deliver excellent education and training to develop the skills for life and work that support employers, economic prosperity and the regeneration of the communities we serve'. The vision and mission statements are underpinned by a set of values, standards and corporate objectives.

5   The College underwent an Ofsted inspection in December 2009. At that inspection, outcomes for students were judged inadequate and the quality of provision was satisfactory. Leadership and management were judged inadequate overall; both safeguarding and equality of opportunity were judged satisfactory. Capacity to improve and overall effectiveness were inadequate. As a result of these outcomes the College underwent a reinspection monitoring visit in June 2010, after which it was reported that the College had made reasonable progress against the areas for improvement identified in the inspection.

6   The College has approximately 3,000 (1,500 full-time equivalent) students. The proportion of students aged 16-18 has increased significantly over the last four years. Although the number of adult students has decreased, an increased proportion of this category studies full-time. Females constitute nearly three-quarters of the College student population, and the College has developed new provision recently to engage more men. There are 111 higher education students (56 full-time equivalents) enrolled. Of these, 85 are enrolled on Certificate in Education or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (Cert Ed/PGCE) and BA (Hons) in Education and Training awards, seven on the Foundation

Degree in Learning Support, and 19 students are enrolled on Edexcel Higher Nationals (HNC/Ds). They are taught by 11 members of staff, and their teaching commitment to higher education provision equates to 4.5 full-time equivalents. The College's higher education provision is taught across three College curriculum departments: Care, Education, Counselling and Access; Computing, Construction and Outdoor Activities; and Commercial and Business.

7   The College is a member of the University of Huddersfield Consortium for Post-Compulsory Education and Training and also offers programmes validated by Edexcel. The College offers the following validated awards, with the full-time equivalent student numbers in brackets:

University of Huddersfield

- Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (28.5)
- BA (Hons) in Education and Training (28)
- FD in Learning Support (4.7)

Edexcel

- HNC/D in Business (5.5)
- HNC Sport (8).

Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies

8   The College has comprehensive partnership agreements in place for the University of Huddersfield awards, and the standard note for Edexcel provision is supported by award specifications. The agreements with the University of Huddersfield cover the PGCE/Cert Ed and FD in Learning Support as part of the Memorandum of Collaboration with the Consortium for Post-Compulsory Education and Training, and separate 'contracts' for Huddersfield University Distributed Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training and the BA (Hons) in Education and Training.

Recent developments in higher education at the College

9   Since the Developmental engagement visit the College has undergone significant change. This has included the appointment of a new Principal, structural changes and the introduction of a new quality framework to support higher education activity. A strategic decision has also been agreed by the Corporation of the College to consider merger options. This is now at an advanced stage where the preferred merger partner has been identified and appropriate due diligence and consultation is taking place for a planned merger from 1 August 2011.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

10   Students on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team, and a student written submission was submitted in advance of the visit. Students were provided with information regarding the IQER review process by their course tutors and the Student Liaison Officer. The groups were initially consulted regarding their higher education experience in May 2009 as part of the Developmental engagement, and again in June 2010. The consultation process was facilitated by the Student Liaison Officer in meetings held with individual groups of higher education students. Discussions focused on the key questions linked to the Summative review report, and the

comments of the students were noted. The student group then reached a consensus on each of the discussion points. Further focus groups were held in November 2010 to engage with new and continuing students, and reports from this were made available to the review team in advance of the visit. The team also met students during the review visit. The student written submission was helpful to the team and the views presented within this submission matched those of the students the team met during the visit.

B   Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education

Core theme 1: Academic standards

How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?

11   There are comprehensive partnership agreements in place for the University of Huddersfield (the University) awards, and a standard note for Edexcel provision supported by programme specifications. The agreements with the University cover the PGCE/CertEd, FD in Learning Support and the BA (Hons) in Education and Training. The responsibilities for the management of higher education academic standards are clearly set out in the agreements. The Memorandum of Cooperation with the University sets out clearly the nature of the shared responsibility for academic standards and quality processes.

12   The teacher education provision offered by the College is part of the Consortium for Post-Compulsory Education and Training, which includes a number of partner colleges as members of the Network of Colleges. The College fully engages with the partnership, which is well established, highly valued and strongly supported by managers and staff at the College. The quality assurance system for teacher education programmes is set out in the Centre Handbook and partnership agreements. The external examiner for the Network commented in the 2009-10 report that there is very effective administration and management between the University and network partners. The team agrees with this view.

13   The College is also a member of the West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network. Staff from the College attend the Lifelong Learning Network Strategic Advisory Forum and the subject sector network meetings. These provide extensive and valuable opportunities to develop relationships and share good practice across the partnership of colleges within the Lifelong Learning Network. This has had a positive impact on academic standards and learning opportunities generally and contributes to the development of the higher education provision. College staff capitalise fully on these links by cascading internally to staff involved with higher education delivery. The capacity and commitment of the College to fully engage in such partnership work results in effective dissemination of good practice and impacts positively on the higher education provision. The team considers this to be good practice.

14   The College Higher Education Strategy is currently under review. However, the College is clear that widening participation and providing local progression into higher education is, and will remain, a cornerstone of this strategy. This is reflected in the diversity of the student population, and the students reported positively on being able to progress locally, which is highly valued by current students. The College continues to take strategic decisions with respect to higher education. For example, all the teacher education programmes have been moved to the Beeston campus, where resources are more appropriate. The team agrees that this has had a positive impact on learning and the student experience.

15   The Higher Education Leadership Group provides a central coordinating role specific to higher education. To date it has played a role in bringing together higher education staff to share their experiences and to deal with operational issues. However, the review team found that due to these changes being recent, the coordination of higher education across the College with respect to standards and quality was unclear. The evidence presented to the team indicated that there are overlaps between the Higher Education Leadership Group, the Internal Verification and Moderation Group and the Quality Leadership Team. It would be advisable for the College to ensure that the Higher Education Leadership Group, Internal Moderation and Verification Group and Quality Leadership Team review their terms of reference, thereby improving the effectiveness of the quality processes for higher education provision.

16   The Curriculum Manager for Care, Education, Counselling and Access has recently taken on the role of Higher Education Coordinator. This role involves responsibility for the dissemination and collation of information between curriculum managers, for providing support in ensuring consistency of procedures across areas, and for the collation of quantitative and qualitative information in the College. From the meetings held with staff, and the documentary evidence provided, it was clear to the team that staff understood these new management and coordination processes for higher education.

17   Course teams meet formally twice a year to review the operation of the courses for which they are responsible. Course teams produce an annual self-assessment report and development plan. The course reviews are informed by lesson observations, student performance data and the views of student focus groups. Targets are set for recruitment and for student performance, which are informed by trend data. The higher education reports feed into departmental annual reports. However, the College does not have a system for approving and verifying higher education reports overall to make an assessment of trends and the quality of learning opportunities for higher education students. It would be desirable for the College to review its systems and procedures to ensure it is able to consider and evaluate the evidence available to enable the College to report on the quality of all higher education provision through the Higher Education Leadership Team.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

18   The College has considered the *Code of practice* in reviewing and developing policies and procedures. Staff also develop their understanding of the Academic Infrastructure through the teacher education network meetings and other events. The College has implemented a range of activities in response to the findings of the Developmental engagement visit. These have included raising awareness of the Academic Infrastructure at staff induction for staff teaching on the higher education courses, and continuous professional development sessions for staff on key elements of the Academic Infrastructure. For example, the new sports team were briefed on the Academic Infrastructure, particularly the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*, by the teacher education staff.

19   Staff have easy access through the staff virtual learning environment to key higher education documents and reference points, including the *Code of practice*, programme specifications, FHEQ and subject benchmarks. Aspects of assessment practice, including malpractice and academic appeals, have been reviewed using the precepts from the *Code of practice, Section 5: Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters,* and *Section 6: Assessment of students* as a guide.

20   Staff on the teacher education programmes develop their understanding through University network meetings and other University events and clearly understood the use of the Academic Infrastructure. A session on the FHEQ was particularly valued by staff. All

students receive course and module handbooks providing full details of the course structure and requirements of the qualifications. These are also made available on the virtual learning environment, along with the assignment briefs for ease of access.

How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?

21   Moderation events take place for the teacher education programmes, involving the University and all network partner colleges. A sample is presented at a moderation event covering a range of student outcomes and all borderline cases. As part of the moderation process, College staff moderate student work from all other centres. This is useful as a development opportunity for staff and also ensures that standards are appropriate. Following moderation, the marked work is sent to the external examiners. This provides the College with useful feedback on the standards being achieved by their students. The team agrees that this process is effective in developing consistent assessment practice for provision offered across the network of colleges.

22   All external examiner and verifier reports are posted on the College virtual learning environment and all senior managers can access this information. This is a useful development in terms of quality monitoring and to support the sharing of good practice. Course teams respond effectively to external examiner and verifier reports, though those on the University programmes normally relate to all network providers. The reports are used to inform course action plans. These reports and evidence made available to the team indicate that standards are appropriate and that programmes are effectively managed.

23   The College has introduced a course tutor report for Higher National programmes. It records student performance data on retention, achievement and success as it emerges through the year, and these are monitored against targets. Individual students at risk of not completing are identified, along with the factors contributing to this risk and the interventions taken. The student performance data indicates that while outcomes vary from year to year they are sound.

What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standards?

24   Staff development needs are identified through a variety of methods. These include evidence from class observations, staff appraisals, and supporting staff involved in new curriculum developments. The College training and development programme is planned by the senior management team, which includes the Higher Education Coordinator. The continuous professional development programme is focused on teaching and learning and development of the skills required to manage the provision, in addition to events for academic support staff. From the staff evaluation results and overall attendance, these have been viewed as positive and provided opportunities to engage in personal and professional development.

25   Staff delivering the University programmes are able to access events at the University network meetings, which are considered to be particularly useful, and staff confirmed that information obtained from these events is cascaded to programme teams and the wider College as appropriate.

26   The most recent development activities include assessment practice, academic writing, tutorial feedback, elements of the Academic Infrastructure, delivering higher education in further education, and using information learning technology. When the HNC Sport was introduced, the course team was supported by events focusing on higher

education and a range of peer support activities provided by experienced higher education staff. The effectiveness of this peer support clearly contributes to quality improvement and the maintenance of a higher education ethos and culture within the College, and is good practice.

The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities as set out in its partnership agreements, for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.

Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities

How are responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities for higher education programmes delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?

27   The College's responsibility and reporting arrangements for the quality of learning opportunities for course and curriculum area review and monitoring is detailed in paragraphs 15, 16 and 17.

28   Since the Developmental engagement the College has introduced a system which involves work undertaken by quality improvement groups. These are short-term, task-related and have recently focused on the development and monitoring of policies, strategies and procedures to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, assessment, support and student engagement. These groups are steered by the Principal with representation from appropriate key staff, who are able to contribute to the particular theme. The team was able to evidence that the work of these groups was having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning within the College.

How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding bodies to ensure that students receive appropriate learning opportunities?

29   The Higher Education Strategy includes details of teaching methods and the use of e-learning within the higher education provision. Students on University programmes have access to both the University and College virtual learning environments. The approval processes carried out for Edexcel and the University ensure that students have access to all resources required for the programme, that staff are suitably qualified, inducted and trained and that quality processes are understood and implemented by the College. Staff delivering teacher education programmes have to be approved by the University, and are required to attend University new tutor training. The College engages fully with these processes, which are aligned to the *Code of practice, Section 7: Programme design, approval, monitoring and review*.

30   The College uses the external examiner reports from Edexcel and the annual review reports from the University to ensure that the requirements of the awarding bodies continue to be met. These are monitored by the Higher Education Coordinator and published on the staff intranet. The meetings held with staff and students and evidence provided to the team confirmed that the College acts upon the findings of the external examiner processes, which contributes to improving the quality of the student learning experience.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

31   This is described in paragraphs 18, 19 and 20. The Academic Infrastructure is clearly integrated into the College's management of learning opportunities and in documentation made available to the team.

How does the College assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?

32   All staff are observed at least once per year by line managers, and staff delivering on higher education programmes are observed in that capacity. Lesson observations are used to inform appraisals and to plan individual continuous professional development activity. Peer observation is used extensively, and all staff are encouraged to take part in the scheme. Reports are produced and shared with the observee and curriculum managers. The team confirms that these reports are used effectively to inform any individual staff development opportunities.

33   The students confirmed that the programme staff use a range of effective teaching and learning strategies. Examples included the use of information learning technology in the HNC Sport, and the use of group learning style profiles on the FD in Learning Support. Teacher education students reported that the range of styles used by their teaching team was particularly useful in helping them to develop their practice. All the students confirmed that the small group size, and the support and accessibility of the tutors, was a major contributing factor to their choice of programme.

34   Students indicate a high level of satisfaction with their programme and comment that they are given adequate opportunity to feed back on their studies. Teacher education programme teams hold student panel meetings involving student representatives, the University Designated Academic Liaison Officer and programme tutors. Students reported that they feel able to give feedback and comment to staff at any time on any course issues. The team concluded that, when students have raised issues about the quality of their experience, these concerns have been acted upon to make the overall experience good.

How does the College assure itself that students are supported effectively?

35   Students report high levels of satisfaction with pre-course information, support at interview and during induction. There is a system of regular, supportive individual personal and academic tutorials. The HNC Sport team incorporates tutorials into the study skills unit, and a comprehensive scheme of work provides academic support for study, preparation for progression and signposting for pastoral support. Evening-only students reported that they have regular informal tutorial support prior to the evening sessions, when their tutor is available for additional individual guidance.

36   Support for progression is good; students report that they are made aware throughout their studies of progression opportunities to higher-level programmes and career routes. Sport students report that the programme team is being particularly proactive in establishing a progression route for them on completion of their programme. The range of staff interventions to make the student learning experience positive was clearly evident to the team. This high level of student support through formal and informal academic and pastoral care systems impacts positively on the student experience and their academic progress, and is good practice.

What are the College's arrangements for staff development to maintain and/or enhance the quality of learning opportunities?

37   The College is an Investors in People-accredited institution and all staff are registered with the Institute for Learning. A staff development policy is in place to ensure all staff are fully supported. A programme of continuous development activities is available throughout the year, with additional events planned for the five staff training days. There are systems in place for experienced tutors to mentor and support new programme teams or new team members. A reduced teaching load is allocated to staff delivering on higher education programmes to ensure they are able to maintain currency in their subject and undertake research and development. The staff are very positive about their staff development opportunities and the College recognises the need to continue to provide more opportunities for subject updating.

How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?

38   Students and staff reported positive changes made to the learning resource centres to support higher education students. This included adjustments to opening times, and changes made to loan arrangements and access to facilities. Specific help on Harvard referencing, plagiarism and research skills are provided. Students reported that book stocks are sometimes limited; however, they commented that online resources are particularly helpful.

39   As a result of the actions taken following the Developmental engagement, positive steps have been taken to address the reliability of the computer systems. Students report that the College and University virtual learning environments are particularly useful, and that access to virtual learning environment resources has enabled them to continue with their studies during periods when they were unable to attend College. Provision of adequate resources forms part of the annual review process, and external examiners monitor this as part of their reporting procedures.

40   The HNC Sport team has forged effective links with sports clubs and facilities in the area and is able to use very specialist equipment at these facilities. They are also using these external links to provide coaching practice and event management experience to their students, and support the community projects delivered at the sports clubs.

The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities as required by the awarding bodies to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Core theme 3: Public information

What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?

41   The University provides the College with the consortium standard documentation and public information required to ensure consistency across the network partners. The College is responsible for translating this information into the higher education prospectus and website information, course leaflets and general information for employers and students. The teacher education team liaises directly with the University Designated Academic Liaison Officer to ensure the information is accurate and complies with University regulations.

42   The College's website has a dedicated higher education section, which is easy to navigate. It provides the ability to download the part-time and full-time courses publication, and the higher education provision is incorporated into this single publication. Individual course leaflets can also be downloaded. The website also provides generic information covering childcare and financial support, information for applicants, travel, learning resources centres, welfare, and other useful contacts.

43   Students on the teacher education programmes are provided, at induction, with material published by the University including module specifications and the Student Handbook, which covers a range of university-specific support arrangements. The College customises this material and provides students with supporting handbooks, which cover college-specific information and contacts.

44   The University produces programme handbooks and module guides, which are discussed at the Consortium Network meetings. The information published for the teacher education programmes is comprehensive, with student handbooks containing course structure and assessment information, in addition to references to College policies and procedures and learning resource information. The handbooks are available in a variety of formats including through the College and University virtual learning environments. Edexcel students are provided with a similar range of materials produced by the College.

45   Subject staff are supported and trained in the use of the College virtual learning environment to enable them to manage the content and quality of the information available to students. This is led centrally through the IT Manager, with support from an IT Systems Administrator. Students confirmed that they value access to remote resources and access it on a regular basis. The progress made since the Developmental engagement was clearly evident to the review team. The College's virtual learning environment is also being increasingly used to support and deliver learning and assessment. From the student evidence provided to the team, it would be desirable for the College to continue to maximise the use of the College and University virtual learning environments to enhance the learning experience.

What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing? How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?

46   The College's Marketing Department has lead responsibility for maintaining the accuracy of the central information which the College publishes. Course handbooks and information sheets are regularly reviewed by curriculum teams and a responsive process is in place to maintain the accuracy of information available to current and prospective students and external stakeholders. This is supported by close working with curriculum managers and tutors to ensure it meets the requirements of the awarding body. For example, staff recognised the prior experience of students progressing with national-level qualifications to the HNC Sport, modified the combination of units in the programme and amended relevant information in line with these changes.

47   The College has standard documentation available on the staff virtual learning environment, which includes a dedicated higher education area. Some documents accessed by the team were not recent, such as the College Information Learning and Teaching Strategy, which was for 2006-07, although a more recent version was available in the College, and the Mentor Handbook refers to 2008-09. It would be desirable for the College to implement a regular check on documents published through the virtual learning environment to ensure that the most recent version is available.

48   An annual programme of activities promotes higher education opportunities available at the College. A local skills analysis has been undertaken by the College, which identifies the higher-level skills requirements and detailed information on the profile of the local community, which has fed into the College academic and business planning processes. Progression information, and presentations by student services staff, are also available to current students at the College. Information talks are provided by subject staff, and this includes advice on progression into further study or employment. Students who have progressed onto higher education from the College reported that this was helpful and informative.

The team considers that reliance can be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

C   Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment

49   The Developmental engagement in Assessment at Joseph Priestley College was carried out in September 2009. The lines of enquiry for the Developmental engagement were discussed in advance of the Developmental engagement team's visit, and three were identified and agreed between the team and College representatives. The lines of enquiry were:

Line of enquiry 1: the College's effectiveness in approving and validating the assessment outcomes, prior to submission to the awarding bodies to support student progression

Line of enquiry 2: the College's ability to manage the effectiveness, consistency and timeliness of assessment feedback across higher education programmes

Line of enquiry 3: the information made available to students accurately reflects the assessment requirements contained within the approved validated programme documentation.

50   The Developmental engagement review team identified a number of areas of good practice for dissemination in the context of the College's management of student assessment. The College was encouraged to ensure that this good practice was shared within the College. Effective processes were in place to monitor and improve the provision. These included an effective range of moderation and standardisation activities, which the College actively engages with as a member of the Teacher Education and Training Consortium Network; the use of a range of communication tools and feedback methods, which enhances the learning experience; and the work-related assessment methods used on the HNC in Business and teacher education programmes. The course handbooks made available for students on the HNC in Business and FD in Learning Support had been customised and added to progressively throughout the student life-cycle, which enhances the assessment process.

51   Some recommendations were also made, which included the College developing and embedding the Higher Education Group and Higher Education Coordinator initiatives; providing focused personal and professional development opportunities for higher education staff; formalising internal assessment and exam board procedures; use of the virtual learning environment should be developed further to support formative and summative assessment; and to increase student engagement to share assessment requirements, which would enhance assessment practice.

52   The team was able to verify that progress had been made to address the recommendations and share the good practice identified during the Developmental engagement. Further enhancements have been made through the introduction of quality improvement groups, which focus on areas for improvement within the College. However, further progress is required to fully utilise the benefits of using the virtual learning environment to enhance and support the student experience.

D   Foundation Degrees

53   The College has one Foundation Degree, the FD in Learning Support, validated by the University of Huddersfield. There are seven part-time students on this programme. The programme has one cohort of students recruited in 2009, who plan to complete their studies in 2012. The review confirms that the programme is aligned to the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark* and the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*. This programme has direct support from the University and network partners. Consultations are ongoing between the University and College concerning support for student recruitment in 2011-12.

54   The good practice and recommendations identified during the Summative review and listed in paragraphs 56 to 59 are common to this programme.

E   Conclusions and summary of judgements

55   The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Joseph Priestley College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, the University of Huddersfield and Edexcel

56   In the course of the review, the team identified the following areas of **good practice**:

- the capacity and commitment of the College to engage in partnership work with awarding bodies and network partner colleges results in the effective dissemination of good practice and impacts positively on the higher education provision (paragraphs 12 and 13)
- the effectiveness of peer support provided by experienced higher education staff clearly contributes to quality improvement, enhancement and the maintenance of a higher education ethos and culture (paragraphs 25 and 26)
- the high level of student support offered to students through formal and informal academic and pastoral care systems, which directly impacts positively on their experiences and academic progress (paragraphs 35 and 36).

57   The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

58   The team agreed one area where the College is **advised** to take action:

- ensure that the Higher Education Leadership Group, Internal Moderation and Verification Group and Quality Leadership Team review their terms of reference, thereby improving the effectiveness of the quality processes for higher education provision (paragraph 15).

59   The team also agreed the following areas where it would be **desirable** for the College to take action:

- review its systems and procedures to ensure it is able to consider and evaluate the evidence available to enable the College to report on the quality of all higher education provision through the Higher Education Leadership Team (paragraph 17)
- continue to maximise the use of the College and University virtual learning environments across all programmes (paragraph 45)
- implement a regular check on documents published through the virtual learning environment to ensure that the most recent version is available (paragraph 47).

60   Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

61   Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

62   Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Joseph Priestley College action plan relating to the Summative review: January 2011						
Good practice	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
• the capacity and commitment of the College to engage in partnership work with awarding bodies and network partner colleges results in the effective dissemination of good practice and impacts positively on the higher education provision (paragraphs 12 and 13)	Develop an annual calendar of continuous professional development events on key areas of good practice to disseminate across the wider team Maintain involvement with and attendance at events at the University of Huddersfield	May 2011	Higher Education Leadership Group to devise a suitable calendar of activity	Best practice is shared and academic networking across the higher education (HE) provision improves teaching and learning and academic success of the students Attendance statistics	HE Leadership Group	Through annual HE self-assessment

• the effectiveness of peer support provided by experienced higher education staff clearly contributes to quality improvement, enhancement and the maintenance of a higher education ethos and culture (paragraphs 25 and 26)	Develop a system of peer observation which incorporates all HE lecturers and provide a HE mentor system	May 2011	HE Co-ordinator	Quality of provision is improved on all HE courses	HE Leadership Group	Key area in HE annual self-assessment
• the high level of student support offered to students through formal and informal academic and pastoral care systems, which directly impacts positively on their experiences and academic progress (paragraphs 35 and 36).	To share good practice relating to academic tutorial system used by the University of Huddersfield courses	July 2011	Higher education team	Support for all students on HE courses is consistently high on all courses	HE Leadership Group	Key area in HE annual self-assessment at course and college level

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed one area where the College should be **advised** to take action						
• ensure that the Higher Education Leadership Group, Internal Moderation and Verification Group and Quality Leadership Team review their terms of reference, thereby improving the effectiveness of the quality processes for higher education provision (paragraph 15).	Review terms of reference at next meetings of each group, with HE Leadership Group taking an overview and ensuring that HE requirements are met by the terms of reference	Sept 2011	Chairs of each group	Clear terms of reference improve the quality processes in HE	Academic Board	College HE annual self-assessment

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed the following areas where it would be **desired** to take action						
• review its systems and procedures to ensure it is able to consider and evaluate the evidence available to enable the College to report on the quality of all higher education provision through the Higher Education Leadership Team (paragraph 17)	Agree format and frequency of a report for HE self-assessment at course level and overall HE courses	June 2011	HE Leadership Group	Clear reporting systems are in place for the reporting of HE results	HE Co-ordinator	College HE annual self-assessment
• continue to maximise the use of the College and University virtual learning environments	Review all HE materials on the College virtual learning environment (VLE) and identify areas which can be developed further;	September 2011	Curriculum co-ordinator for HE	All programmes show an increase in the use by students of the VLE and there is a good range of resources	HE Co-ordinator	Course and College HE annual self-assessments

across all programmes (paragraph 45)	training needs analysis of HE tutors in relation to VLE skills and usage			available for all programme areas; Observation of teaching and learning reports		
• implement a regular check on documents published through the virtual learning environment to ensure the most recent version is available (paragraph 47).	Check all HE materials on the College VLE on a regular basis	June 2011	Curriculum co-ordinator for HE	Complete and up-to-date material is available to all students	HE Co-ordinator	HE annual self-assessment to address e-learning