



North London College

Review for Educational Oversight
by the Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

March 2012

Key findings about the North London College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in March 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the Association of Business Practitioners, the Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education, Education Development International plc, and the Institute of Administrative Management.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding organisations.

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

Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the scheduled and additional tutorial arrangements effectively support achievement (paragraph 2.9)
- the clear and focused formative and summative feedback (paragraph 2.10).

Recommendations

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

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:

- strengthen the mechanisms for the review of academic standards through structured action planning so that the Academic Board decisions are consistently recorded and tracked (paragraph 1.3)
- develop consistent annual programme monitoring procedures, including action planning to reflect external moderation recommendations and student feedback (paragraph 1.3)
- update the prospectus and review its disclaimer statement to ensure it accurately reflects higher education programmes offered (paragraph 3.3)
- update the student handbook annually in readiness for new intakes of students (paragraph 3.4)
- review, revise and disseminate to staff the quality handbook (paragraph 3.5).

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

- further clarify the responsibilities for quality and standards between the Principal and the Director of Studies (paragraph 1.2)
- fully implement the new Teaching and Learning Strategy (paragraph 2.6)
- involve students in quality enhancement through formal consideration of student feedback (paragraph 2.11)
- develop an overview of and formal strategy for staff development (paragraph 2.13)
- develop a virtual learning environment to enhance student access to support and programme materials (paragraph 2.16)

- update its website to make clear the information and services available (paragraph 3.2)
- revise the Public Information Responsibilities policy to include stakeholder consultation (paragraph 3.6).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the North London College (the provider; the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the Association of Business Practitioners, the Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education, Education Development International plc, and the Institute of Administrative Management. The review was carried out by Dr Clive Marsland, Professor Donald Pennington and Mrs Trudy Stiles (reviewers) and Mrs Mandy Hobart (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).² Evidence in support of the review included programme reports, external moderators' reports, College policy documents and procedures, remits, minutes of meetings and handbooks supplied by the provider and awarding organisations, supported by meetings with staff during the review visit.

The review team also considered the provider's use of the relevant external reference points:

- the Qualifications and Credit Framework.

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report you can find them in the [Glossary](#).

North London College (the College) was set up in 1982 as the Accountancy Tuition Centre, specialising in preparing students for accountancy qualifications. In October 1984, the name was changed to the North London College of Accountancy. The provision was mainly geared to adults, including women returners and students resitting examinations.

In 1993, the College relocated to its present premises on the High Road, Tottenham, and its name was changed to North London College. The change of name reflected the wider provision offered, including higher level programmes in business and administration management, managing quality standards in children's services and leadership in health and social care. The College mission statement is to 'serve the needs of the diverse community through excellence in teaching, learning and support programmes, contributing to the social, cultural and economic development'. At the time of the review, the College had five higher level students.

At the time of the review, the College offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations:

Association of Business Practitioners (ABP)

- Leadership and Management in Health and Social Care (Level 7)

Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education (CACHE)

- Managing Quality Standards in Children Services (Level 4)
- Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services (Level 5)

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4.

² www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

Education Development International plc (EDI)

- Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services (Level 5)

Institute of Administrative Management (IAM)

- Diploma in Administrative Management (Level 4 and 5)
- Diploma in Business and Administrative Management (Level 4, 5 and 6)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The management of standards and the quality of higher education is set out in centre regulation documents of the awarding organisations. The College is responsible for the management of standards and the monitoring of the quality of learning opportunities, as specified within the agreements. The standards and quality of programmes are reviewed by moderators. Reports are scrutinised at College level by senior management, with responsibility for standards and quality resting with the Principal. Reports are produced annually and improvements monitored by internally constituted boards and committees. External examinations and tests are set by CACHE, EDI and IAM.

Recent developments

The College has been focusing increasingly on higher level provision for overseas students. With the Home Office withdrawal of the College's licence, the students registered on programmes have been obliged to seek alternative providers. The College is seeking to expand its provision for domestic and EU students.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. However, due to the College having had its licence suspended at the time of the review, no cohorts of students were registered, and no submission was possible. The team was able to meet with a group of students who had returned to the College for revision classes, and to discuss their learning experience.

Detailed findings about North London College

1 Academic standards

How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1 The College has defined responsibilities for monitoring standards. The Chief Executive (President) of the College has overall responsibility for maintaining standards and promoting enhancement through a process of monitoring and review. Much of this overarching responsibility is delegated to the Principal and the Academic Board. The Principal's responsibilities for standards centre on evaluating teaching quality, conducting and reporting to the Academic Board on staff appraisals, evaluating staff training forms and acting as a conduit for student feedback.

1.2 The Director of Studies plays an important role in assuring and enhancing quality and standards, assisting the Principal and working closely with the teaching staff. While the Principal has a remit for monitoring standards, it is the Director of Studies who meets regularly with teaching staff both formally and informally, monitors standards, and reports back to the Principal and Academic Board. The role played by the Director of Studies in assuring and enhancing quality and standards is not fully reflected in the College's responsibilities structure, but the team identified that the role is of significant value. The Director of Studies attends teaching team meetings, Staff Board meetings and the Academic Board, and has the main responsibility for maintaining a coherent overview of standards. The team considers it desirable for the College to further clarify the responsibilities for quality and standards between the Principal and the Director of Studies to ensure rigour and consistency in management systems.

1.3 While the Academic Board discusses quality and standards and awarding organisations' moderation reports, few formal actions are recorded and monitored. Standards are largely evaluated through consideration of achievement and results, but few specific actions are noted. The Academic Board has no consistent agenda item to review standards or identify and monitor actions, following receipt of external moderators' reports. Teaching staff are aware of reports, but no action plans are used to record progress. Consequently, the team found little evidence of clear and consistent monitoring of standards either through the Academic Board or teaching team meetings minutes. The team considers it strongly advisable that the College strengthens the mechanisms for the review of academic standards through structured action planning so that the Academic Board decisions are consistently recorded and tracked. The team further identified that the College operates a relatively informal method of annual monitoring, predicated on annual reports, which include student results, external awarding organisations' monitoring reports and accompanying action plans. To further support clear evaluation of progress, the College is advised to develop consistent annual programme monitoring procedures, including action planning to reflect external moderation recommendations and student feedback.

1.4 The principal document for outlining the strategic oversight of quality and standards within the College is the quality handbook. The handbook in its current format includes reference to documents such as the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Review and Action Plan, and the Professional Learning Community document, which are not currently fully used by the College. The Professional Learning Community document, which maps standards to policies, while of value in supporting staff, would benefit from more regular updating to reflect actual practices.

1.5 Moderation to assure standards is carried out effectively within the College by staff who ensure the awarding organisations' requirements are met. A number of staff are designated as internal moderators. External moderation reports and awarding organisations' visits confirm that standards are being maintained. The College intends to use periodic review for every course not less than once in every three years, and annually for those programmes developed in consultation with an awarding organisation. At the time of the review visit, no such reviews had yet been completed.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management of academic standards?

1.6 All programmes delivered by the College are written and accredited to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) by the awarding organisations. The development and review of specifications and most assessments are the responsibility of the awarding organisations, with the exception of the Association of Business Practitioners (ABP) assignments. The College's principal engagement with external reference points is in relation to meeting the requirements of its respective awarding organisations, through the application of assessment guidance. Responsibility for mapping of specifications against national reference points, such as subject benchmark statements, is the responsibility of the awarding organisations. Where staff set assessments, these are approved by the awarding organisations, who ensure that they meet the learning outcomes and assess knowledge and understanding at the required level. For health and social care provision, assessment also takes account of the required National Occupational Standards competencies. Grading criteria linked to learning outcomes are produced by the awarding organisations and effectively applied to assessed work by the College, in both formative assessments for all programmes and summative assessments as appropriate. Sound procedures are in place for moderation, which are thoroughly applied to the appropriate level, as confirmed by the recent satisfactory quality monitoring reports from Education Development International plc (EDI) and Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education (CACHE).

How does the provider use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?

1.7 The awarding organisations are responsible for the external moderation of work marked by the College. In the case of the level 4 and level 5 diplomas accredited by the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM), all work is externally set and marked, and the College is only responsible for formative assessment marking. For the other awarding organisations, with the exception of ABP, assessment titles are externally set and referenced to QCF levels and professional body criteria as appropriate. The College is responsible for setting assessments for the ABP programme, but as this provision was only introduced in 2011 there has been no annual report. The College marks work using the awarding organisation-devised grading criteria. The College has joint responsibility for moderation of assessments for EDI and CACHE programmes. Work is internally moderated with samples being externally moderated and assessment titles externally reviewed. The College exercises its responsibilities appropriately and feedback is provided through annual awarding organisations' reports.

The review team has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding organisations.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.1 The College has a range of delegated responsibilities in relation to the quality of learning opportunities, which are managed to meet the awarding organisations' requirements, as outlined in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2. For all the awarding organisations the College is responsible for providing academic teaching, tutorials, and progression guidance. Responsibility rests with the College for reviewing and responding to annual monitoring reviews, module and centre evaluations and the monitoring of the quality of learning opportunities.

2.2 The College has rigorous recruitment procedures for ensuring potential students have appropriate qualifications and English language skills. All students are interviewed and they may be asked to complete a test where appropriate. Procedures for the interviewing of applicants were tightened in 2010 and now include the use of online video interviews for overseas students to verify the identity of the applicant, the level of English language and other qualifications. The College offers advice to potential students on the most appropriate programme of study to meet their aspirations and may also make recommendations on the most appropriate course of study, even if that is within another institution.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities?

2.3 The use of external reference points is largely undertaken by the awarding organisations and the College has limited responsibility for ensuring their effective use. The awarding organisations make use of external reference points, as outlined in paragraph 1.7. Programme specifications, programme handbooks and module descriptors are all written and produced by the awarding organisations.

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

2.4 Oversight of qualifications and teaching rests with the Academic Board and the Principal, but is operationally managed by the Director of Studies. The College ensures that all staff have appropriate qualifications to deliver higher level provision. The President has overall responsibility for staff recruitment, and is assisted by the Principal and the Director of Studies. The awarding organisations specify the minimum qualification levels for teaching on their higher level programmes and approve staff profiles. The College also looks for previous practical sector-related experience or teaching experience. At present, the College has no part-time teaching staff, but where part-time staff are employed, many are also sector practitioners.

2.5 To monitor standards and quality, teaching sessions are observed regularly by the Principal and other senior members of the College staff. The teaching observation form has recently been revised to focus on different areas of classroom monitoring. Observation forms are filled in and outcomes discussed with the lecturer. Where weaknesses are identified, the College seeks to support the individual and, if required, to sponsor them to attend external training or development. Good practice from teaching observations is highlighted and other staff encouraged to observe teaching or other elements of student support. In addition to the formal classroom observations, senior managers regularly observe teaching on a drop-in basis. Students are clear that this supports the quality of teaching, and is documented through end-of-year surveys. While the team is satisfied that the

frequency and focus of these observations meets expected threshold standards, the wider dissemination of good practice and areas for development would be of benefit both to individuals and to further support standards. The team notes that peer observation of teaching has recently been introduced.

2.6 Where programmes have low pass rates, the Director of Studies explores the contributory factors and takes appropriate action. This includes speaking to the tutor responsible for delivery and analysing the available information. Resulting corrective actions may include a review of entry requirements, review of teaching strategies, and putting in place additional support for students, including study skills, language support or tutorial support. A new Teaching and Learning Strategy has been drafted to provide a clear framework for monitoring and supporting the quality of learning opportunities, including raising success rates. The low success rate in the Case Study unit on the IAM Diploma, for example, has resulted in the College putting in place extra revision classes to support resits. The Case Study unit has presented challenges for the application of concepts, which reflects a national trend, and the teaching team and Director of Studies have agreed this needs to be moved towards the end of the programme. The team considers it would be desirable for the College to fully implement the new Teaching and Learning Strategy to ensure the support of the development of good quality teaching across all programmes.

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

2.7 A range of mechanisms and procedures are in place to ensure that students receive academic and welfare support. Current students value the arrangements that begin with efforts to ensure they are on an appropriate course through to constructive advice on progression on completion of their award. Students confirmed that they knew who to contact, both in and out of College time, when they needed help or guidance. They also confirmed that support from teaching staff is both flexible and responsive, and can be requested directly or by phone or email even outside of normal teaching hours.

2.8 The College induction process ensures students receive key information to understand how their course is run and the attendance and assessment requirements. All students received a copy of the student handbook. Students all complete an induction checklist and sign to certify they have received and understand key information. Clear information is provided on plagiarism, referencing and on how to note sources. Programme and unit handbooks provided by the awarding organisations outline grading criteria, learning outcomes and assessment strategies.

2.9 The academic support is clearly structured and understood by students. Students receive timetabled tutorials, additional one-to-one academic support and organised revision sessions linked to final examinations and assessments. The level of tutorial and academic support effectively ensures students' understanding of their programmes, and is tailored to meet individual needs. The scheduled and additional tutorial arrangements promote achievement and represent good practice. Where students may need further support or guidance on their assessments, they are able to contact tutors by email or text, as outlined in paragraph 2.7.

2.10 Students understand the grading criteria and value the comprehensive formative and summative feedback on their work, including constructive written feedback and one-to-one feedback in tutorial discussions. Staff review draft work to help students with their understanding of key criteria. Where problems in the understanding of criteria and topics are identified, solutions are shared more broadly with classes. In the case of externally assessed programmes, staff encourage students to complete formative assessments based on past papers, and provide constructive feedback. Students who receive individual support have key actions noted in tutorial plans, and dates for additional work to be submitted are

recorded and submissions monitored against deadlines. Flexible additional support is also available, and students are encouraged to ask for clarification and guidance as many times as needed. Feedback on student work is normally provided within three weeks for summative assessment, but students reported that work was often returned within a week. Late submissions are penalised and students confirmed that they are made aware of penalties. Students confirmed that they valued the clear and focused formative and summative feedback which is relevant and supportive of their internal and external assessments, and the team identified this as good practice.

2.11 The College has a range of mechanisms for gathering feedback from students, which are well understood by staff and students. Student views are gathered through written evaluations at the end of programmes, feedback from student representatives and through tutorials and informal feedback to lecturers. The latter is not formally recorded. Student representatives do not at present attend teaching team meetings. Some improvements have been made based on points raised in surveys, for example the improvement in information technology facilities and access. At present, there is no documented process to ensure that student data and feedback are systematically analysed to inform quality, programme reviews and improvements. It would be desirable for the College to involve students in quality enhancement through formal consideration of student feedback.

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

2.12 A process of staff self-evaluation has recently been introduced to link with staff development, and individual lecturers are encouraged to identify areas for their own development. Areas identified can then be discussed in the light of peer review and teaching observations which link to staff appraisal, so as to provide a holistic picture of performance and development needs. As this is a new process, there is as yet no evidence of the impact of this initiative.

2.13 The College has recently implemented broader staff development, including training sessions. Recent sessions in January 2012 have included a training workshop to provide clear guidance on providing advice and supporting weaker students, and a session in February for IAM tutor training. Staff updating mainly involves lecturers attending the awarding organisations' training events, and through membership of professional groups, which the College encourages. As the staff group is small, they are able to exchange information and feedback on an ongoing basis. Staff development is also facilitated through external examiner and assessor responsibilities mentioned in paragraph 1.5 and through observation procedures as outlined in paragraph 2.5. As staff development has generally been considered on an individual basis, there is no evidence of broader evaluation of staff development. It would be desirable for the College to develop an overview of and formal strategy for staff development to assure the quality of teaching and learning.

How effectively does the provider ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes?

2.14 The College ensures that students have access to essential resources, and monitors requirements through programme team and student feedback. The College library houses most of the key textbooks students need for programmes and a range of journals. Students also make use of public libraries and some make use of e-journals and online resources accessed through the internet. Students are provided with book lists for each unit through the programme handbooks and unit descriptors supplied by the awarding organisations. The students confirmed that they were able to access all necessary texts and

resources. The College also provides wireless internet access for students who can utilise their own laptops to work in the library or common room areas.

2.15 Most students are on full-time modes of study, but some IAM programmes also have part-time students drawn from the local community, who are also provided with access to the library. Student information needs are gathered through tutorial sessions and student surveys, and are reviewed by the Academic Board. The College does not operate formal work-based learning or placements. Students are supported on the work-related aspects of their programmes, including applications of theory and analysis of work-related case studies and practices. This in turn helps improve the employability skills of students.

2.16 At present, students have no access to a virtual learning environment and no online support outside of emails from tutors. The College, through student and staff feedback, has recognised the need to develop a virtual learning environment, and this is a key strategic priority. The College has identified essential requirements for the virtual learning environment, has sought advice from external experts, and is exploring access to e-books and e-journals. The team considers it desirable for the College to develop a virtual learning environment to enhance student access to support and programme materials.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

3 Public information

How effectively does the provider's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?

3.1 The College is responsible for publishing a range of information, both through its website and in hard copy, about its higher education provision. This includes a prospectus and a student handbook. Furthermore, the College is responsible for procedures to ensure the accuracy of public information. It is also responsible for publishing the awarding organisations' information on its website and in its prospectus, and for producing information on all provision to comply with the awarding organisations' requirements.

3.2 Students found out about courses through local advertisements and the College's website. They found the website useful in helping them decide about the course best suited to their needs. The College's website was revised towards the end of the 2011. The revisions included the views of staff and students. The website indicates a facility for students to log in to online support, but this is not as yet available, and it is desirable that the College updates the website to make clear the information and services available.

3.3 The College prospectus provides information about entry requirements and details for each programme, along with other information that may be of help to students new to the College and to living in London. This document includes a disclaimer concerning the accuracy and completeness of information provided, which the team found unclear. The prospectus also states that 'its courses are mainly for adults', though only the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants programme information includes reference to minimum age requirements. The prospectus has not been updated for two years and needs further revisions to reflect recent strategic decisions to discontinue some programmes in order to ensure its current offer is clearly shown. It would be advisable for the College to update the prospectus and review its disclaimer statement as soon as possible to ensure it

accurately reflects higher education courses to be offered and clearly identifies relevant age requirements for each course.

3.4 All students are issued with a student handbook which is used during the student induction programme along with an induction checklist. The handbook was revised two years ago. While students found the handbook very useful, it is in need of updating to reflect changes that have been made at the College over the past few months so as to provide accurate guidance. It would be advisable for the student handbook to be updated annually in readiness for new intakes of students at the College.

3.5 The College has recently produced a quality handbook as a key reference for all staff. This important document provides a framework for the management of standards and quality, including references to key documents such as the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Review and Professional Learning Community document as discussed in paragraph 1.4, which are as yet not fully completed or implemented. Consequently, the quality handbook does not reflect all current practices or new procedures that have been introduced to support standards. The team considers it advisable for the College to review, revise and disseminate to all staff the quality handbook and to ensure it reflects current procedures and responsibilities so that it is fit for purpose.

How effective are the provider's arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information it has responsibility for publishing?

3.6 The College has recently produced a document providing guidance for promoting and marketing courses. The guidance addresses how the College should go about ensuring that public information is correct and accurately reflects the requirements of the various awarding organisations, and is supported by the College's Public Information Responsibilities policy. To ensure that the College meets its responsibilities regarding public information it is important that this guidance and the Public Information Responsibilities policy become embedded across the College. However, the College has had limited consultation with students about the quality of information provided in documents such as the student handbook. It would be desirable for the College to revise the Public Information Responsibilities policy to include stakeholder consultation.

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

Action plan³

| North London College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight March 2012 | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------|--|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Good practice | Action to be taken | Target date | Action by | Success indicators | Reported to | Evaluation |
| The review team identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider: | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the scheduled and additional tutorial arrangements effectively support achievement (paragraph 2.9) | To continue with the good practice and seek more avenues for improvement and update through continuing professional development and standardisation meetings | Ongoing | Director of Studies (to cascade to all tutors) | Student improvement and success in exams, assignments or other assessments | Academic Board | Termly/annual performance review published by Academic Board |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the clear and focused formative and summative feedback (paragraph 2.10). | <p>There is already a tutorial system in place and incorporated into timetables</p> <p>Forms for both individual and group tutorials are in place to capture data needed in planning support</p> | Action already taken | Director of Studies (to cascade to all tutors) | <p>Tutorial evaluation from students' monthly feedback</p> <p>Internal and external assessments results</p> | Principal Academic Board | Review and evaluation of progress made on target group by the Academic Board |

³ The provider has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the provider's awarding organisations.

| Advisable | Action to be taken | Target date | Action by | Success indicators | Reported to | Evaluation |
|--|--|--------------|---------------------|---|--|--|
| The team considers that it is advisable for the provider to: | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen the mechanisms for the review of academic standards through structured action planning so that the Academic Board decisions are consistently recorded and tracked (paragraph 1.3) | <p>The minutes will identify responsibility for any open issues and incorporate an action template and record progress</p> | 13 July 2012 | Principal | Production of plan and action plan for each meeting with tracking of resolution of open issues | Director of Operations Academic Board | Evaluation of success by the Academic Board |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop consistent annual programme monitoring procedures, including action planning to reflect external moderation recommendations and student feedback (paragraph 1.3) | <p>Periodic reviews by awarding organisations and other internal or external sources and student feedback will be assessed for applicability across the curriculum</p> <p>An action plan will be developed and adoption of good practice tracked</p> <p>Details will be consolidated in an</p> | 13 July 2012 | Director of Studies | <p>Embedding the process into the College routines</p> <p>Agenda item on all Academic Board meetings</p> <p>Result and reports from future external moderators' visit</p> | Principal Academic Board | Review process of implementation through team meetings midway of each term by Principal and reports to Academic Board for evaluation |

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|--|--|--|--|--|----------------|---|
| | annual report | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> update the prospectus and review its disclaimer statement to ensure it accurately reflects higher education programmes offered (paragraph 3.3) | Review and revise the current prospectus | <p>Draft copy 31 May 2012</p> <p>Amendment and approved copy by Academic Board 13 July 2012</p> <p>Uploaded 30 July 2012</p> | <p>Director of Studies</p> <p>Head of English (ESOL) and Functional Skills</p> | <p>Meeting target dates</p> <p>Opinion of QAA</p> | Academic Board | Feedback from students, tutors and other stakeholders |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> update the student handbook annually in readiness for new intakes of students (paragraph 3.4) | Review and revise the current student handbook | <p>Draft copy 13 July 2012</p> <p>Amended and approved copy by Academic Board 30 August 2012</p> <p>Circulation September 2012</p> | <p>Principal</p> <p>Director of Studies</p> <p>Head of English (ESOL) and Functional Skills</p> | Approval of contents by Academic Board by the target date | Academic Board | Feedback from students, tutors and other stakeholders |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review, revise and disseminate to staff the quality handbook (paragraph 3.5). | Review and revise the current student handbook | <p>Draft copy 13 July 2012</p> <p>Amended and approved copy by Academic Board 30 August 2012</p> <p>Circulation</p> | <p>Principal</p> <p>Director of Operations</p> <p>Director of Studies</p> <p>Head of English</p> | <p>Meeting target dates</p> <p>Approval of contents by Academic Board and student representative</p> | Academic Board | Feedback from students, tutors and other stakeholders |

| | | September 2012 | (ESOL) and Functional Skills | | | |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Desirable | Action to be taken | Target date | Action by | Success indicators | Reported to | Evaluation |
| The team considers that it is desirable for the provider to: | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> further clarify the responsibilities for quality and standards between the Principal and the Director of Studies (paragraph 1.2) | Review organisation chart Job specification Roles and reporting Define reporting and procedures | 13 July 2012 | Director of Operations | Production of evidence and implementation of plan by the target date | Academic Board | Review of new process Feedback from Academic Board members |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully implement the new Teaching and Learning Strategy (paragraph 2.6) | Ensure full implementation once delivery commenced in the new academic year 2012-13 | 30 September 2012 | Director of Studies | Feedback from course leaders Feedback from students | Principal | Class room delivery monitoring Academic Board report |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> involve students in quality enhancement through formal consideration of student feedback (paragraph 2.11) | Establish robust documentation system for all contacts and feedback from students Establish formal procedures where students are represented in tutors and Academic Board meetings and their | Procedure set up 30 September 2012 Implementing November 2012 meetings | Academic Board | Implementation of action by planned date Student feedback Student feedback as an agenda item on the Academic Board minutes | Board of Directors | Student body feedback Academic Board report on feedback from other stakeholders |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|----------------|---|
| | views considered in publication of public information | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop an overview of and formal strategy for staff development (paragraph 2.13) | <p>Develop Yearly Plan</p> <p>Regularise standardisation meeting</p> | 30 October 2012 | Director of Operations | Continuing Professional Development Report | Academic Board | Academic Board publication on staff development and progress evidence |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a virtual learning environment to enhance student access to support and programme materials (paragraph 2.16) | Decide between prospective software houses supporting modules | <p>Identify software provider 30 June 2012</p> <p>Review progress 13 July 2012</p> <p>Implement agreed system 30 December 2012</p> | Head of English (ESOL) and Functional Skills | Operational by agreed date | Academic Board | Students and tutors feedback |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> update its website to make clear the information and services available (paragraph 3.2) | Review web contents and update in line with current provision | <p>Introduce update 30 May 2012</p> <p>Further update 30 July 2012</p> | Head of English (ESOL) and Functional Skills | Agreed changes uploaded by agreed date | Principal | Academic Board review, feedback from students and staff |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revise the Public Information Responsibilities policy to include stakeholder consultation (paragraph 3.6). | Review and revise public information responsibilities by incorporating stakeholder consultation | 30 April 2012 | Principal | Policy change by agreed date | Academic Board | Feedback from students and Academic Board report |

About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk.

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/tier-4.

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)⁴

Academic Infrastructure Guidance developed and agreed by the higher education community and published by QAA, which is used by institutions to ensure that their courses meet national expectations for academic standards and that students have access to a suitable environment for learning (academic quality). It consists of four groups of reference points: the **frameworks for higher education qualifications**, the **subject benchmark statements**, the **programme specifications** and the **Code of practice**. Work is underway (2011-12) to revise the Academic Infrastructure as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

academic quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, institutions manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards The standards set and maintained by institutions for their courses and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

awarding body A body with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the **framework for higher education qualifications**, such as diplomas or degrees.

awarding organisation An organisation with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework for England and Northern Ireland (these qualifications are at levels one to eight, with levels four and above being classed as 'higher education').

Code of practice *The Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, published by QAA: a set of interrelated documents giving guidance for higher education institutions.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed to perform a particular function.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

enhancement Taking deliberate steps at institutional level to improve the quality of **learning opportunities**. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

feature of good practice A positive aspect of the way a higher education institution manages quality and standards, which may be seen as exemplary to others.

framework A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks:

⁴ www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland.

highly trusted sponsor An education provider that the UK government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

learning opportunities The provision made for students' learning, including planned **programmes of study**, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios) and staff development.

learning outcome What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

operational definition A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reports.

programme (of study) An approved course of study which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

programme specifications Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **programmes of study**, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

provider An institution that offers courses of higher education, typically on behalf of a separate **awarding body or organisation**. In the context of REO, the term means an independent college.

public information Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

quality See **academic quality**.

subject benchmark statement A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

threshold academic standard The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications frameworks. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

widening participation Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.

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