# Park Royal College

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

April 2012

# Key findings about Park Royal College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in April 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 Executives, the Association of Business Practitioners, The Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality, Edexcel, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the University of the West of England, Bristol.

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 bodies and 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**:

- comprehensive support for work-based learning (paragraphs 2.6, 2.11)
- regular, frequent and helpful tutorials (paragraph 2.7)
- the large amount of valuable information on the College website (paragraph 3.2).

## 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:

- fully implement the quality assurance framework through its various boards (paragraph 1.3)
- provide more detailed written feedback on assessed work on the Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management (paragraph 1.8)
- fulfil its intention to provide more books in hard copy to further support student learning (paragraph 2.10)
- further develop the procedures for the oversight and design of course information (paragraphs 3.3, 3.4).

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

- extend the Quality Manual to provide more comprehensive information on all external reference points relevant to the provision (paragraph 1.5)
- make the programme specifications more detailed (paragraph 1.6)
- make more consistent use of the virtual learning environment (paragraph 2.5).

# About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Park Royal 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 the Association of Business Executives, the Association of Business Practitioners, The Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality, Edexcel, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the University of the West of England. The review was carried out by Dr Elaine Crosthwaite, Mr John Skinner, Mrs Trudy Stiles (reviewers), and Dr Peter Steer (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 documentation supplied by the provider and the awarding bodies and organisations, as well as meetings with staff and students.

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

- the Academic infrastructure
- the Qualifications and Credit Framework
- the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework
- Sector Skills Council guidelines for tourism and health.

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

Park Royal College (the College), formerly known as A & S Training College, was acquired by its current proprietors in 2004. It is a part of the AIMA group. In 2010, the College started offering higher education programmes, building on its previous experience in delivering work-based vocational qualifications. The College is a limited company and is owned by two co-directors, who hold executive roles on the College's Management Board. The College, with the help of its parent group, maintains its own student recruitment centres in countries such as India and the Philippines. It does not use agents. It occupies a self-contained floor within a large multi-use building, having moved to its current location in north-west London in 2008.

There are four departments, each with a head who reports to the Academic Standards Manager and on to the Director of Studies: Business, IT and Professional Studies; Health, Care and Community; Travel, Tourism and Hospitality; and Work-based Learning. There is a Lead Compliance Tutor, who supports heads of department on issues relating to the academic aspects of compliance with government requirements. Enrolments for the session 2011-12 (to date) are 776. All students are full-time. Enrolments for 2010-11 totalled 534.

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

**Edexcel**
- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Sector (only available to College staff)
- HNC Health and Social Care

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[1] [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4).
[2] [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx).

**University of the West of England, Bristol** (delivered through the Management Development Partnership starting May 2012, with promotion already in progress)
- BSc (Hons) top-up degree Health Care Management
- BSc (Hons) top-up degree Business Management
- BSc (Hons) top-up degree Tourism and Hospitality Management

**Association of Business Executives**
- Advanced Diploma in Business Management
- Graduate Diploma in Business Management
- Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management

**Association of Business Practitioners**
- Postgraduate Diploma In Health Care Management

**The Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality**
- Diploma in Hotel Management
- Advanced Diploma in Hotel Management
- Graduate Diploma in Tourism and Hotel Management
- Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management

**Scottish Qualifications Authority**
- HNC/D Social Care and Social Services
- HND Computing
- Professional Development Award in Practice Learning

## The provider's stated responsibilities

On the Association of Business Practitioners, Edexcel and the Scottish Qualifications Authority awards, the College takes responsibility for setting the assessments, their marking and the feedback to students. The Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality sets the assessments on all its awards and undertakes moderation externally, except for the Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management. The College provides first marking and feedback to students. The Association of Business Executives takes responsibility for the setting and marking of assignments and the provision of feedback to students on its awards.

For all programmes, the College is responsible for recruitment and admissions, and also for the provision of appropriate resources, teaching and student support to successfully deliver the awards. Public information provided by the College is its sole responsibility for all awarding bodies and organisations, except for the University of the West of England awards.

## Recent developments

The College has been providing higher education programmes since November 2010. Five programmes started in the academic year 2010-11. Since then, the number of programmes and the number of students has grown rapidly. The College is working towards finalising the acquisition of the London College of Management Studies, but this review does not cover that provision.

## Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team and did so in March 2012. Student representatives from across the College compiled it, based on meetings with other students. The report is independent and balanced, and was produced almost entirely by the students. Some of these student representatives met the coordinator at the preparatory meeting and the team at the review. All student involvement was helpful for the team, providing an insight on a number of topics, including the information and support they receive.

# Detailed findings about Park Royal College

## 1        Academic standards

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

1.1        The College's responsibilities to its awarding bodies and organisations are clearly understood. The College procedures clearly recognise that its delegated responsibilities differ between awarding bodies and organisations. Depending on the awarding body or organisation, the College has delegated or shared responsibility for all or some of the following: the setting and marking of assessments, internal verification, monitoring and review, and the provision of feedback on completed work. Only the Association of Business Executives takes full responsibility for all of these aspects of academic standards. External examiners and verifiers for all programmes are appointed and regulated by the policies of awarding bodies and organisations.

1.2        There are some effective procedures and policies for the oversight of academic standards. The College has recently implemented a revised management structure with responsibility for standards. The Management Board includes the College's senior resource managers and the Director of Studies, who has strategic responsibility for academic quality. The Academic Standards Manager reports to the Director of Studies and has a wide range of duties, primarily overseeing the delivery of the curriculum and the coordination of monitoring and review processes. Heads of academic departments, and the Lead Compliance Tutor, who deals with the academic aspects of government regulations, all report to the Academic Standards Manager. The College has established policies and procedures to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities for assuring academic standards. These include detailed course monitoring arrangements, assessment, appeals and plagiarism policies, which are all included in the Quality Manual.

1.3        The committee structure with oversight for higher education was established in the academic year 2011-12. It involves some overlap of responsibilities and sometimes lacks a strategic oversight. It includes three boards: the Academic Board and the Quality Board which both report to the Management Board. There is also an Academic Appeals Board, which is convened as required. The Quality Board is led by senior members of the teaching staff. It has a wide-ranging remit covering a number of aspects of academic standards and course delivery and its enhancement. The terms of reference and the minutes of meetings indicate that the boards overlap in their remits. They also do not include a clear brief regarding the dissemination of good practice. Moreover, there are matters affecting College policies where some strategic oversight is missing; for example on the policy implications of the cases of plagiarism last year on the HNC Health and Social Care. Staff indicated that the ultimate responsibility for the academic oversight here lies with the Academic Board, where the matter was reported mainly in terms of the decisions taken, not by reviewing in detail the relevant College policies and procedures. Discussions at another committee similarly lacked policy consideration. The College indicated that the effectiveness of the new structure will be formally reviewed in summer 2012 and some modifications would be necessary. It is advisable to make sure that the College fully implements the quality assurance framework through its various boards.

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

1.4        The College makes appropriate use of the awarding bodies and organisations' information, including the relevant external reference points, for its oversight of standards.

Course delivery aligns with the relevant external reference points, including sector and professional benchmarks, the Qualifications and Credit Framework, the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework and the Academic Infrastructure. Members of staff attend the awarding bodies and organisations' briefings and several are external examiners, thus enabling them to inform the oversight of standards.

1.5     The Quality Manual makes extensive use of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*), although there is much less on other external reference points. The awarding bodies and organisations' benchmarks and qualification frameworks are not covered in detail. More explanation and analysis would assist staff in making more extensive use of the Quality Manual as a source of information about external reference points. The College indicates that the Quality Manual is to be further developed. It is desirable to extend the Quality Manual to provide more comprehensive information on all external reference points relevant to the provision.

1.6     Programme specifications are available for all courses, although they often lack detail. The College has drawn on the awarding bodies and organisations' course information to prepare these using a standard template, and anticipates a role for them in programme review and monitoring. However, several programme specifications do not wholly conform to QAA guidance on the use of external reference points and lack detail, for example with respect to the intended learning outcomes. It is desirable to make the programme specifications more detailed.

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

1.7     The College has suitable procedures in place to maintain academic standards. Where assessment design is devolved to the College, it has developed verification processes that align with the regulations of awarding bodies and organisations. They involve heads of department undertaking or overseeing internal verification of assignment briefs and student assessments in their subject area. The reports of external verifiers indicate that the College has appropriate systems for assessing candidates in line with the awarding bodies and organisations' standards. However, some College documentation fails to make a clear distinction between second marking and internal verification.

1.8     The quality of summative written feedback varies between courses. The College provides it for students on the Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management. Written feedback seen by the team is, however, not detailed or clearly linked to learning outcomes, so does not provide students with sufficient developmental guidance about how they can improve. There is little evidence of this being identified by internal procedures like verification. It is advisable to provide more detailed written feedback on assessed work on the Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management. Summative written feedback to students on Edexcel courses is much more helpful to students.

1.9     The College has suitable mechanisms in place to evaluate the effectiveness of its provision. These include course quality reviews, which are undertaken regularly through the year, covering a variety of aspects of delivery, and which inform the annual programme reports. The College responds appropriately to reports from the awarding bodies and organisations' officers, external examiners and verifiers. To date, only one cycle of review has been completed, culminating in consideration of the course quality reviews and annual reports for the 2010-11 academic year by the Quality, Performance and Standards Board that has now been superseded by the Quality Board. These course reports provide useful analysis of the provision. The College also assesses its effectiveness through the success rates of students on externally assessed awards.

> 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 bodies and 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 is clear about the responsibilities delegated by the awarding bodies and organisations concerning the quality of learning opportunities. These include: student recruitment and induction, staff development, collecting and acting on feedback from students, and ensuring resources are appropriate.

2.2 The College has generally effective procedures for overseeing the quality of learning opportunities. The management and committee structures, discussed in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3, are also relevant to the quality of learning opportunities. Major resource decisions are made by the Management Board, while heads of department hold delegated budgets for day-to-day expenditure. Decisions are strongly influenced by feedback from students. One example is the improvements to the book stock.

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

2.3 The College engages effectively with the *Code of practice* relevant to its management of learning opportunities. For example, the *Code of practice*, *Section 9*: *Work-based and placement learning* informs the management of placements, including the role of the workplace mentors and employers. The *Code of practice*, *Section 10*: *Admissions to higher education* guides standardised admissions procedures for both overseas and domestic applicants. The College support for students with disabilities and additional learning needs aligns with the *Code of practice*, *Section 3*: *Disabled students*. All policies are clearly documented and available to staff and students.

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

2.4 The College has appropriate procedures for the oversight of its teaching. It requires all teaching staff either to have or be working towards a suitable teaching qualification. There are formal teacher observations, based upon Ofsted criteria, which are linked to appraisal. All teaching staff are observed a minimum of three times each year by either the Director of Studies or the Advanced Teacher Practitioner. The College places great emphasis on observations and the grades received by staff are now consistently high. It is considering the introduction of external moderation to help the benchmarking of grades. A peer observation scheme operates separately from the formal observations. Staff actively engage with peer observation, enhancing the sharing of effective practice across the College. The College uses student surveys, information collected in tutorials and student representative meetings to obtain feedback on teaching. Students value the teaching they receive and report that it supports their learning effectively.

2.5 Staff use a suitable range of teaching methods. Delivery includes: lectures, group work, workshops, visiting speakers, supported independent study and tutorials. This variety of approach mitigates the pressures on learning, caused by each programme having all its teaching concentrated in two days each week. Students strongly support this pattern of

teaching. The College is developing a virtual learning environment to support learning outside the classroom. The students met by the team find the virtual learning environment very valuable, if it includes extensive teaching and learning material. Only some programme areas have a virtual learning environment site in use and on some of these content is limited. It is desirable to make more consistent use of the virtual learning environment.

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

2.6     AIMA Limited's international offices, particularly one in India, provide effective support to students before and after enrolment. Staff in these offices ensure that students are advised properly on their choice of course. Interviews are available by appointment or on a walk-in basis, or by telephone for applicants not able to go in person. The Student Advisory Service, based in India, with a staff of 20 provides immediate telephone advice to students throughout their studies, which they find very valuable. The Indian office also provides a valuable work placement service and administrative functions.

2.7     The College provides excellent tutorial support for students. There is a helpful induction process covering both academic and non-academic areas. Students receive one hour each week of timetabled tutorials and a minimum of five individual review and action planning sessions each year with their academic progress tutor. The students consider that they are well supported. They particularly welcome the helpful tutorial support they receive, including the daily access to their academic progress tutor. The regular, frequent and helpful tutorial contact provides students with excellent academic support and constitutes good practice. The College has detailed progression data, based on a sophisticated tracking system, which shows that in the few cases where retention rates are low, for example on the Diploma in Hotel Management, the reasons are mainly financial.

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

2.8     The College's approach to continuing professional development provides a suitable underpinning for the provision. Many teaching staff are qualified to master's or doctoral level. The College identifies staff development needs primarily from the probationary procedures for new staff and by the appraisal and observation processes for existing staff. The College employs a software package that provides effective tracking of staff development activity. Most current staff development is of a generic nature. This includes training on sharing good practice, assessment and benchmarking, and is sometimes provided by the awarding bodies and organisations. There is less emphasis on subject-specific development. All new teaching staff are subject to a six-month probationary period during which they participate in regular review meetings. The process encourages reflection on performance and provides opportunities for constructive feedback and the identification of development needs.

2.9     The College is developing methods to disseminate effective practice. The peer observation of teaching assists the dissemination of good practice. Interdisciplinary meetings are a valuable means of professional development and there is a strong commitment from staff to organise practitioner-led continuing professional development. This has led to the formation of the Good Practice Forum bringing together lecturing staff from across the College.

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

2.10     Generally, resources are sufficient to support the provision. Teaching and learning and information technology facilities are suitable. Planning is based on the present teaching

pattern of students being taught at the College for two days each week with not all courses having the same designated days. The digital library, introduced this year, has over 77,000 e-books and journals and is a valuable resource, although not all texts are relevant to the current curriculum on offer. Only limited downloading is available from the digital library and also the production of paper copies has significant cost implications for students, especially off-campus. Senior staff and students indicate that there is a need for a greater physical library stock of course-specific texts, particularly for extensive and detailed study outside the College. College staff indicated that more books in hard copy are planned, particularly as student numbers are increasing. It is advisable for the College to fulfil its intention to provide more books in hard copy to further support student learning. Students on the relevant courses have useful access to online learning resources from the Association of Business Executives and The Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality. The students welcome the new information technology room, upgraded Wi-Fi, and the relocation of the e-books to a quiet area, which they requested.

2.11     The College ensures that students undertaking a work placement do so in a safe and effective manner. Students have clear points of contact at the College and with their employer. The Student Placement Team is located partly at the College for direct contact with employers and the consideration of the suitability of the placements, with additional functions undertaken by AIMA's Indian office. It provides valuable practical advice and support to students concerning placement opportunities, organises job interviews, negotiates fair rates of pay and ensures that placements are suitable in health and safety terms. It also tracks and monitors students in placements and provides them with a telephone advice service before and during work placements. Students value this support and indicate that their learning in placement is more effective as a result. The College provides comprehensive support for work-based learning, ensuring that students undertake placements in a safe and effective manner. This constitutes good practice.

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 fulfils the various delegated responsibilities on public information given to it by its awarding bodies and organisations. The College is responsible for most of the public information it provides, including course descriptions, selection procedures and student handbooks. Some awarding bodies and organisations provide module information directly, while for the rest, the College develops the material locally. All dual-branded documents are approved by the awarding bodies and organisations before they are published.

3.2     The College website is a rich source of public information for prospective and current students. A useful site map aids navigation of the website. A comprehensive range of documents can be downloaded from the information hub or using the many clearly labelled tabs. These include valuable advice and guidance for prospective students with a description of each course followed by the entry requirements. For enrolled students, the College's student handbook provides a comprehensive guide to the provision relevant to all courses, including information on student responsibilities, work, attendance and assessment requirements, academic misconduct, marking and grading policy, appeals and complaints,

progression procedures, and how students can provide feedback to the College on their experiences. The College treats a further range of documents, including annual programme reports, its strategic plan and the Quality Manual, as public information and makes them available on the website. The website also gives staff, students and employers access to a wide range of College policy documents, for example on careers education, work-based learning, disability and safeguarding learners. The College uses its website as a repository for its public information in accordance with its environmental policy and does not generally issue information for students in hard copy. Current and prospective students print the documents if they require a paper copy. The large amount of valuable information on the College website constitutes good practice.

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

3.3 Generally, the College has suitable procedures for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the information for which it is responsible, although in a few cases there is a lack of detail. Course leaders are responsible for the information to be published about their programmes. This information is checked by the relevant head of department with the Academic Standards Manager providing an additional oversight. The Director of Studies and College Principal are then jointly responsible for the overall quality of these publications and also the general College information available on the website. The awarding bodies and organisations' information reproduced by the College is approved by an awarding body or organisation's representative. Generally, published information is accurate and complete. However, for the University of the West of England programmes, delivered through the Management Development Partnership, the information available to prospective students was not complete. Until it was changed at the time of the review visit, the information on the website failed to make clear that the student transcript would indicate where the student had studied. The website indicates that the degree certificate would not include this information and would be indistinguishable from that of a student who studies at the University.

3.4 Student handbooks do not always provide sufficiently detailed guidance. The College provides all the course handbooks and some module handbooks. They are a combination of the awarding bodies and organisations' information and additional material developed by the College. The College has designed templates for its course and module handbooks. Many course handbooks, while using the template, lack detail. An example relevant to a number of handbooks is a lack of precise dates for the submission of coursework assessments or the sitting of examinations. Module handbooks are often supplied by the awarding bodies and organisations. The College issues these to students without modification. An exception is the handbooks for the Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management. An example seen by the team, while not inaccurate, has a layout and design that makes it difficult to understand and therefore provides limited guidance for students. It is advisable to further develop the procedures for the oversight and design of course information.

3.5 The College monitors effectively the response of students to the public information it publishes. It obtains regular feedback from students through induction surveys, module evaluations, questionnaires and student voice meetings. Students indicate that they are happy with information they receive from pre-enrolment until they leave the College.

> 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 plan[3]

| Park Royal College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight April 2012 | | | | | | |
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| **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: | | | | | | |
| • comprehensive support for work-based learning (paragraphs 2.6, 2.11) | Establish an employer forum and review annually<br><br>Establish an employer forum with a view to establishing knowledge transfer activity | September 2012 to establish<br><br>Review formally each term at College Board/Senior Leadership Team | Director of Studies<br><br>Business Development Manager<br><br>Director of External Affairs<br><br>Head of Kenton Campus | Employers will have even more engagement with the College and will be actively engaging with curriculum planning from a subject sector/industrial perspective<br><br>Students will benefit from more contextual industrial links in teaching, learning and placement | Senior Leadership Team<br><br>Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student Representative Group<br><br>Teaching teams | Mid-course Course Quality Review, annual programme reports and annual self-assessment report will comment on the impact of the work of the forum<br><br>Forum review minutes will highlight the impact for employers and make recommendations<br><br>Evidence via |

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| | | | | | | student feedback will provide an evaluation of the impact of more collaborative working between the College and employers |
| • regular, frequent and helpful tutorials (paragraph 2.7) | To continue to review and monitor provision and to determine enhancements in line with the changing needs of the student body | At the end of each term, students and tutors will be asked to evaluate | Deputy Director of Studies and heads of campus<br><br>Tutors to enable students to engage with feedback processes | Students will demonstrate that any planned enhancement as a result of their feedback and that of their tutors has improved their learning experiences, including improved learner support | Senior Leadership Team<br><br>Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student Representative Group<br><br>Teaching teams | Mid-course quality review, annual programme reports and annual self-assessment report will monitor the impact upon course performance<br><br>Student feedback will provide evidence of impact and this will be further evidenced within tutorial planning |
| • the large amount of valuable information on the College website (paragraph 3.2). | To continue to review and monitor provision and to determine enhancements in line with the changing needs of the College and its audience<br><br>Continue to work in | To be reviewed at the end of each half-term<br><br>Formal report to Senior Team | Director of Studies<br><br>Business Development Manager<br><br>Director of External Affairs | Public information will retain currency and will provide users with the information that they require in order to make informed choices | Senior Leadership Team<br><br>Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student | Mid-course quality review, annual programme reports and annual self-assessment will identify the impact in terms of recruitment and |

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| | collaboration with partners such as awarding organisations/bodies to ensure the currency and accuracy of information | at the end of each term | | Public information will enable current and future students to make informed choices<br><br>Public information will demonstrate transparency of the work of the College | Representative Group | retention<br><br>Feedback obtained from students will help the College to evaluate the effectiveness of the information that it makes available to students and its impact on the student experience |
| **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: | | | | | | |
| • fully implement the quality assurance framework through its various boards (paragraph 1.3) | A comprehensive review of the current structures and functions to clear and auditable implementation of the quality assurance framework across the College<br><br>Ensure that the framework maintains currency and is an effective tool for following process | September 2012 | Senior Leadership Team<br><br>Quality Board Members<br><br>Deputy Director of Studies<br><br>Heads of department/campus | The Quality Assurance Manual and all College policies are to be reviewed and made more user-friendly<br><br>Staff and students will engage with the consultation on the quality assurance | Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student Representative Group<br><br>Teaching teams | Discussion at Quality Board and Academic Board will drive changes<br><br>Positive feedback from staff and students following the planned themed workshops<br><br>Staff development records<br>Team meeting |

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| and procedure in relation to the quality assurance systems within the College<br><br>Ensure that the quality assurance framework is fully aligned with precepts of the Quality Manual | | | | framework in July 2012 and will attend a series of themed workshops that focus on the effective implementation of the framework throughout the College | | minutes |
| • provide more detailed written feedback on assessed work on the Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management (paragraph 1.8) | A review of assessment procedures, quality and standards within the department and a professional dialogue with the awarding organisation to ensure rapid improvement, parity and consistency | July 2012 - dialogue with the awarding organisation<br><br>Ongoing monitoring and review at the end of each module | Chief Examiner from The Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality<br><br>Deputy Director of Studies<br><br>Head of Department<br><br>Team members | The quality of feedback to students will be enhanced and improved to meet the standards maintained across the rest of the College | Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student Representative Group | Annual Programme Report will identify the impact of the planned improvement<br><br>External monitoring by the Quality Unit will provide feedback to staff members<br><br>Student focus group from the programme will look at how improvements have enhanced their learning experience |
| • fulfil its intention to provide more books in hard copy | The College is reviewing its resourcing strategy | August 2012 for report to the | Senior Leadership Team in consultation with | Provision is enhanced and further | Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board | Annual self-evaluation will focus on |

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| to further support student learning (paragraph 2.10) | regarding learning resources and will consult widely on the need and demand to enhance and develop current provision<br><br>Planning of two resource focus workshops involving staff and students to identify needs at academic and student level | Management Board<br>Ongoing monitoring at Academic and Quality Board<br><br>Ongoing monitoring at student engagement events | college-wide stakeholders<br><br>These stakeholders include all teaching staff and student representatives | developed in accordance with the determined curriculum requirements<br><br>More physical learning resources will be made available to students | Student Representative Group | improvements and further actions<br><br>Feedback from staff and students to determine progress made and areas where enhancement is further required |
| • further develop the procedures for the oversight and design of course information (paragraphs 3.3, 3.4). | The College is to undertake a consultation exercise with the awarding bodies and organisations to enhance and secure a working policy and protocol that ensures that absolute reliance can be placed on the accuracy of course handbooks | September 2012 - publication of new course handbooks | Business Development Manager<br><br>Deputy Director of Studies<br><br>Heads of department | Absolute reliance can be placed on the accuracy of course handbooks | Senior Leadership Team<br><br>Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student Representative Group | Positive feedback from students via evaluation forms and from the awarding bodies and organisations<br><br>Align products with Clear English Campaign Methodology |
| **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: | | | | | | |
| • extend the Quality Manual to provide more | A comprehensive review of the current Quality Manual to | December 2012 | Collaborative action by:<br>Senior Leadership | The Quality Assurance Manual and all | Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board | Discuss at Quality Board and Academic Board |

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| comprehensive information on all external reference points relevant to the provision (paragraph 1.5) | ascertain and secure its currency and the results to be effectively communicated across the whole College<br><br>Plan a series of themed workshops looking at the Quality Manual and changes in light of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education | | Team<br>Academic and quality boards<br><br>Deputy Director of Studies and heads of department | College policies are to be reviewed and made more user-friendly | Student Representative Group<br><br>Teaching teams | will drive changes<br><br>Positive feedback from staff following the planned themed workshops<br><br>Staff development records<br><br>Team meeting minutes |
| • make the programme specifications more detailed (paragraph 1.6) | Review and rewrite programme specifications in line with the Academic Infrastructure guidance | September 2012 | Deputy Director of Studies<br><br>Heads of department and teaching teams | Programme specifications will contain the range of information that is required to provide students with the appropriate information | Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student Representative Group<br><br>Teaching teams | Positive feedback from students via evaluation forms and from the awarding bodies and organisations<br><br>Align products with Clear English Campaign Methodology |
| • make more consistent use of the virtual learning environment (paragraph 2.5). | The College is to continue investing in the development of the virtual learning environment to include remote access<br><br>Staff to receive | Ongoing development<br><br>Training for staff by September 2012<br><br>First formal | Head of Department for IT and Business Development Manager and all academic staff | Wider use and access by all students and staff<br><br>Quality materials will populate the platform to enhance learning | Academic Board<br><br>Quality Board<br><br>Student Representative Group<br><br>Teaching teams | Mid-course reviews in January/February 2013 will identify the impact of the planned improvement<br><br>Course teams to |

| | training on the effective use of the virtual learning environment | review of progress in January 2013 | | | | evaluate effectiveness in enhancing delivery |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | | | Student focus group from the programme will look at how improvements have enhanced their learning experience |

# 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 1 to 8, with levels 4 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:

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[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.

All QAA's publications are available on our website www.qaa.ac.uk