



Centre for Teaching in Management

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

September 2012

Key findings about the Centre for Teaching in Management

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in September 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 award it offers on behalf of the University of Wales.

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 this awarding body.

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 high level of pastoral support provided to students (paragraph 2.9)
- the provision, in advance of planned recruitment to programmes, of extensive, appropriately focused, high-quality learning resources for students (paragraph 2.11).

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:

- review the academic committee structure and its effectiveness (paragraphs 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2)
- ensure that the internal procedures for the writing, pre-assessment moderation, marking and post-assessment moderation of student work result in intended learning outcomes being assessed at the appropriate level (paragraph 1.7)
- introduce more rigorous procedures to ensure that sufficiently detailed and constructive written feedback is provided to students on their work (paragraph 2.5)
- introduce a structured employer engagement policy to support the proposed portfolio of vocational programmes (paragraph 2.12).

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

- map its policies and procedures against the *Code of practice* and provide training for staff on the emerging UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraph 1.5)
- progress the introduction of a formal system of peer review of teaching (paragraph 1.9)
- revise the learning and teaching strategy to reflect the characteristics of the Centre (paragraph 2.4)
- develop a formal method of collecting feedback on public information from students, staff and other stakeholders (paragraph 3.4).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the Centre for Teaching in Management (the provider; the Centre). 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 University of Wales. The review was carried out by Paul Chamberlain and Brenda Eade (reviewers), and Jeffery Butel (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 its awarding body, meetings with staff and students, and a report of inspection by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges.

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

- University of Wales
- the Academic Infrastructure.

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

The Centre for Teaching in Management (the Centre) was incorporated in July 2009 as a private limited company with a single shareholder who is a member of the senior management team and also acts as the Student Welfare Officer. It occupies a city-centre site in Birmingham and has the stated aim of providing higher education in management with a focus on finance and international business. There are 3.70 full-time equivalent management and administrative staff, a full-time Principal and three lecturers, each representing 0.2 full-time equivalent, making a total of 1.60 full-time equivalent academic staff.

In January 2011, the University of Wales validated three of the Centre's programmes: a two-year BA Business Studies programme, a one-year MSc Finance and a one-year MSc Management. Only the MSc Management has recruited. Four students enrolled on the Human Resource Management stream of the MSc Management; one had his registration terminated and three are due to complete by the end of 2012. One has been studying full-time and two part-time, to top up existing qualifications.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programme, listed beneath the awarding body with full-time equivalent students shown in brackets:

University of Wales

- MSc Management (2.13)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The provider states that it is responsible for student recruitment, induction and guidance, collecting and acting upon student feedback, the appointment of staff and their higher

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

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

education updating, and the provision of library, information technology and other learning resources.

Recent developments

A new full-time Principal/Director of Studies and an Administrator were appointed shortly before the commencement of the review. The Centre is seeking to recruit students to the BA Business Studies and both MSc programmes from January 2013. In addition, it is an approved centre for the Organisation for Tourism and Hospitality Management and intends recruiting to its programmes from January 2013. The Centre is in negotiation with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David to replace its current agreement with the University of Wales from 2014.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. A student submission was submitted. The Centre briefed the students on key areas to be addressed. The submission contained observations from each of the students individually and was helpful to the team in conducting the review. In addition, all three students met the coordinator during the preparatory meeting and the team during the review visit.

Detailed findings about the Centre for Teaching in Management

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The Centre is at the early stages of development, but has an effective management structure which enables it to fulfil its responsibility to its awarding body. The Principal, who is also Director of Studies, takes overall responsibility for the management of academic standards. He liaises closely with his colleagues and responds to requests from the University of Wales. The Centre benefits from its close relationship with a more mature institution with established policies and procedures for the management of academic standards. The Centre has drawn significantly upon these.

1.2 The Centre does not have a clear strategy for planning its future portfolio, but intends to continue offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in business and management. From January 2013 it intends to recruit to The Organisation for Tourism and Hospitality Management (OTHM) programmes and from 2014 to University of Wales Trinity Saint David's programmes. The Centre is an approved centre of the OTHM for the delivery of its programmes at levels 3 to 7, but it does not have a clear rationale for their development and was unclear about its roles and responsibilities in relation to the OTHM. During the review visit, the Centre provided the team with a revised set of respective responsibilities for its relationship with the OTHM.

1.3 The committee structure does not enable the Centre to take an overview of academic standards. There is overlap between the various committees and a blurring of associated responsibilities. The Academic Committee, reporting to the Senior Management Team, will receive reports from the programme committee which meets at the end of the year. However, this committee has not yet met. The Quality Manual also refers to a Course Management Committee and Course Committee. A Staff and Student Liaison Committee has met several times during the academic year. The terms of reference and membership of these committees, and the flow of information between them, are not clearly defined. Day-to-day internal monitoring is managed by the Principal/Course Director through email communications and informal meetings with tutors. There are weekly meetings of the permanent staff, but these cover a wide range of operational issues, including marketing, finance and administration. It is advisable that the Centre reviews the committee structure, develops clear terms of reference for each, identifies the required flow of information between them and clarifies the responsibilities of the associated staff.

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

1.4 The Centre has made effective use of external reference points in the design of the curricula for the University of Wales undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The programme specifications reference subject benchmark statements and module specifications reflect appropriate level descriptors. The OTHM will provide a further external reference point when the Centre delivers these programmes.

1.5 Discussions with staff indicate that they are not completely familiar with the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*) or the new UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). The Quality Handbook, which includes assessment regulations, is based on the

requirements of the University of Wales, but does not refer directly to the *Code of practice*. Furthermore, the Centre's admissions statement requires further development to conform to the *Code of practice*. It is desirable that the Centre maps its policies and procedures against the *Code of practice*, particularly *Section 6: Assessment of students* and *Section 10: Admissions to higher education*, and provides training for staff on the Quality Code.

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

1.6 The Centre is responsible for the writing and marking of assessments for the University of Wales' programmes and has processes for scrutinising assessment briefs prior to distribution to students, marking and second marking. The external examiner, appointed by the University of Wales, and the University of Wales moderator attend examination boards and comment on the academic standards.

1.7 The level of learning and teaching and related assessment have not, in the past, been wholly appropriate to level 7. In response to a condition of the University of Wales validation report, the Centre has rewritten the intended learning outcomes for some modules in the master's programmes to ensure that they are at the appropriate level. The external examiner suggested that examination questions at this level should encourage students to synthesise and analyse. It is advisable that the Centre strengthens the internal procedures for the writing, pre-assessment moderation, marking and post-assessment moderation of assessment to ensure that intended learning outcomes are assessed at the appropriate level.

1.8 The Centre is required to complete an Annual Monitoring Report for University of Wales' programmes. This has yet to be submitted, as the first cohort of students has only just completed the taught element of the MSc Management. The Centre intends to submit the report later in the year. This will be considered by the Centre and University Joint Board of Studies, which has not yet met.

1.9 The Centre states that it undertakes self-analysis regularly and the administrative and academic processes and procedures are subject to audit. An action plan has been drawn up as a result of this process and the writing of the self-evaluation. Required actions resulting from annual monitoring will be added to this plan. The Centre has operated an informal peer review system and intends to implement a formal system for 2013. It is important that this facilitates the sharing of good practice. It is desirable that progress is made on the introduction of a formal system of peer review of teaching.

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 body.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 At this early stage in its development, the Centre has created an appropriate and effective infrastructure to support the management of learning opportunities for the small number of students currently enrolled. As defined in the formal agreements with the University of Wales and OTHM, the Centre is responsible for student recruitment and selection, student admissions, guidance and induction, collecting and acting upon student feedback, the appointment of staff and their higher education updating, and the provision of

library, information technology and other learning resources. Management structures are designed to allow the Centre to fulfil its responsibilities, although they are not yet fully operational. It is intended that an Academic Committee, reporting to senior management, will receive reports from programme committees, thus providing an overview. A Resources Committee will inform resource decision-making.

2.2 Representatives from the University of Wales confirm that the Centre is meeting its agreed responsibilities for the management of learning opportunities effectively. Oversight is provided through the Senior Management Team. While this embryonic structure provides a secure environment currently, as the Centre's provision expands, greater clarity in the committee structure will be required.

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

2.3 The Centre draws heavily upon the validating bodies for its external reference points. Documents produced for internal use reflect an awareness of elements of the *Code of practice* relevant to the Centre's defined responsibilities, for example, in admission of students, the availability of progression and careers advice, and provision for disabled students. However, as noted in paragraph 1.5, staff require greater familiarity with elements of the Academic Infrastructure and the Quality Code to engage effectively with them.

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

2.4 The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning requires more robust systems. A concise teaching and learning strategy, closely related to the programme specifications published by the University of Wales, provides the context for assuring that the quality of teaching and learning is maintained. This student-centred document provides an appropriate pedagogical context for enhancement. It does not define the institutional structures and processes through which quality may be comprehensively measured and innovation monitored. Although many of the objectives of the strategy are being met, operational processes, for example the employment of effective academic support and study skills training, are not monitored. It is advisable that the teaching and learning strategy is revised to ensure that the objectives are adequately contextualised.

2.5 Summative assessment is managed through the processes defined by the University of Wales. Although the allocation and moderation of marks is conducted satisfactorily, the external examiner noted the absence of effective written feedback on assignments. In addition, the moderator noted that comments from second markers are perfunctory. Students commented on the limited feedback provided on their work. Although students receive formative assessment, the provision of this is not adequately informed by the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*. It is advisable that more rigorous processes are applied to the assessment of students' work to ensure that written feedback is sufficiently detailed and constructive.

2.6 An informal teaching observation scheme is being formalised into a more robust, reliable and informative procedure. Students' views on teaching and learning are obtained through module evaluation forms, the results of which are reported to the programme team. The value and effectiveness of these has been demonstrated recently where student feedback resulted in changes being made to the teaching team of a module. Further feedback is obtained from the Staff and Student Liaison Committee, the minutes of which demonstrate clear responses to a range of student concerns. The Centre aims to implement an Enhancing Student Experience Policy Report in which student comment and opinion will be recorded systematically.

2.7 Admission processes are outlined clearly and administered appropriately. A comprehensive and well-planned induction provides students with background information, programme details, key contacts and details of procedures for the electronic submission of assignments and the use of anti-plagiarism software. Students confirm that the Centre is engaging effectively with their expectations.

2.8 Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Appointment of staff is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team and follows procedures set out in the Quality Assurance Manual.

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

2.9 The Centre has highly efficient processes to ensure that students are supported effectively. The dedicated Student Welfare Officer is a member of the Senior Management Team. This ensures that student welfare is considered at a high level, facilitating rapid and effective responses to arising issues. He liaises with teaching and administrative staff to address complaints and grievances. Tutorial support is provided on an informal basis, but students are highly complimentary about the quality of the tutorial and pastoral support they receive, noting particularly the responsiveness of tutors outside teaching hours, despite the fact that many are employed on a part-time basis. The high level of support provided to students is good practice.

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

2.10 The Centre stresses the importance of staff development and its commitment to providing suitable opportunities for its employees. Two members of staff are currently undertaking professional qualifications with the support of the Centre.

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

2.11 Students are provided with a high-quality learning and teaching environment, containing well-furnished and equipped lecture rooms, open-access private study spaces and a recreational area. Appropriate learning resources are provided for the range of programmes on offer, including those which have not recruited. The library is well stocked and includes multiple copies of key texts. In addition, students have access to the online library resources of the University of Wales. As the provision grows, it is intended to recruit a dedicated librarian to maintain the resource base. A part-time information technology technician provides technical support. Students confirm that library and computing resources, including the embryonic virtual learning environment, meet their needs. Capacity exists for currently planned growth. The provision, in advance of planned recruitment, of extensive and high-quality learning resources for students is an example of good practice.

2.12 Plans for developing employer engagement are at an early stage, although the Centre's action plan has set clear objectives. Through their work elsewhere, staff have valuable links, which the Centre is seeking to draw upon to establish an employers' network. Given the importance placed upon employer links to underpin future curricular provision, it is advisable that the Centre introduces a structured employer engagement policy to support the planned portfolio of programmes.

<p>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.</p>

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 Centre's website provides clear information about its programmes and how to apply. This is the main source of information for potential applicants and students confirm that they have found the contents accurate and sufficiently detailed. The Centre follows the University of Wales' information protocol, as set out in its agreement with the University, and directs prospective applicants to the OTHM website for information on these awards. A small leaflet is also available for potential applicants, which provides details of the Centre, programmes and how to apply. Students confirm that this information is helpful. There has been an extensive advertising campaign in local schools, supported by publicity material, although the effectiveness of this will be judged by subsequent recruitment levels.

3.2 At induction, students are provided with a handbook which includes details of the programme of study, assessment regulations and the Centre's policies in relation to disability and equality. Programme specifications are available for the University of Wales' programmes. For OTHM programmes, students are directed to its website, from where curricular and other details can be downloaded.

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

3.3 Overall responsibility for the accuracy of public information is managed effectively by the Principal. Arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information are made in response to the clearly stated protocols of the University of Wales. These protocols are appropriately observed. The Admissions Tutor monitors recruitment procedures and admissions, and makes any recommendations for changes. Staff are encouraged to check the website regularly for accuracy. Changes to the website are undertaken by the Centre's information technology technician, following approval by the Principal. Students consider that the information they received in advance and after enrolment has been accurate and complete, although their feedback has not been sought formally. The Centre has appointed an external adviser to review and comment on the website.

3.4 Feedback from students on public information is not collected formally. However, the student voice is heard. This is illustrated by the Centre meeting their request for the reinstatement of the Centre's virtual learning environment when it was withdrawn due to technical problems. Notwithstanding this, it is desirable that a formal method of collecting feedback on public information from students, staff and other stakeholders is developed.

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

Centre for Teaching in Management action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight September 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 high level of pastoral support provided to students (paragraph 2.9) 	Enhance the support by employing more full-time staff	January 2013	Student Welfare Officer and Principal	<p>Improved formal support systems demonstrated by existing and the new staff members</p> <p>Student feedback at Student Staff Liaison Committee meeting</p>	Senior Management Team	<p>End-of-year joint meeting of Academic Committee and Senior Management Team</p> <p>Staff and Student Liaison Committee meeting</p> <p>Student feedback by student survey/questionnaire, report to Academic Committee and Senior Management Team</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the provision, in advance of planned 	Recruit more students to all the programmes	January 2013	Principal/Director of Studies and Course	Increased number of students for all programmes	Academic Committee	Annual College and course review

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 body.

recruitment to programmes, of extensive, appropriately focused, high-quality learning resources for students (paragraph 2.11).	available with extensive marketing Appoint a librarian to manage the library Will consider making the information technology technician full-time depending on the increasing number of students		Administrator	commenting positively on the quality of resources and learning opportunities provided	Senior Management Team	End-of-year joint meeting of Academic Committee and Senior Management Team
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"> review the academic committee structure and its effectiveness (paragraphs 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2) 	Review the academic committee structure, focusing on responsibilities and the linkages between them	April 2013	Academic Committee	More effective academic committee structure and improved communication between committees Audited by Senior Management Team/external consultant	Senior Management Team	End-of-year Joint Meeting of Academic Committee and Senior Management Team (Internal audit by Senior Management Team/external consultant)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the internal procedures for the writing, pre-assessment 	Provide workshops and seminars for staff to improve their knowledge in this	April 2013	Academic Committee	Improved procedures for preparing examination	Senior Management Team	External examiner reports University moderators

<p>moderation, marking and post-assessment moderation of student work result in intended learning outcomes being assessed at the appropriate level (paragraph 1.7)</p>	<p>matter, with particular emphasis on level 7</p>			<p>questions and the assessment process</p> <p>Intended learning outcomes appropriate to the level of study</p>	<p>External examiner</p> <p>Awarding body</p>	<p>comments</p> <p>Examination Board meeting and minutes</p> <p>Annual College and course review</p> <p>Feedback from staff on effectiveness of workshops</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce more rigorous procedures to ensure that sufficiently detailed and constructive written feedback is provided to students on their work (paragraph 2.5) 	<p>Improve process for providing written feedback on student work to ensure that it is more detailed and constructive</p> <p>Provide workshops and seminars for staff/tutors to improve on this matter</p> <p>Share good practice in the provision of written feedback</p>	<p>July 2013</p> <p>April 2013</p> <p>July 2013</p>	<p>Academic Committee</p>	<p>Improved written feedback on student work in line with the <i>Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students</i></p>	<p>Senior Management Team</p> <p>External examiners</p> <p>Awarding body</p>	<p>Examination board meeting</p> <p>Annual College and course review</p> <p>Student feedback will help to evaluate good practices</p> <p>Student progress will be evaluated by Exam Board and Academic Committee</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce a structured employer engagement policy to support the proposed portfolio of vocational 	<p>Develop a well-structured employer engagement policy</p> <p>Approach local councils, businesses, and</p>	<p>January 2013 and continuously</p>	<p>Student Welfare Officer</p> <p>Course Administrator</p> <p>Principal/Director of Studies</p>	<p>A well-developed employer engagement policy with clear terms of reference and associated responsibilities</p>	<p>Senior Management Team</p>	<p>End-of-year joint meeting of Academic Committee and Senior Management Team</p> <p>Staff and Student</p>

programmes (paragraph 2.12).	organisations to build the relationship in order to establish links for student work placement opportunity			Sufficient number of students for work placements Students undertaking successful work placements with the linked employers Positive feedback from students and employers		Liaison Committee Student feedback Employer engagement policy
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"> map its policies and procedures against the <i>Code of practice</i> and provide training for staff on the emerging UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraph 1.5) 	<p>Provide workshops and seminars for staff to familiarise them with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)</p> <p>Develop policies and procedures against the <i>Code of practice</i>, particularly <i>Section 6: Assessment of students</i> and</p>	September 2013	Principal/Director of Studies Course Administrator	<p>Clear understanding of the UK Quality Code by all staff</p> <p>Clear policies and procedures in line with the Quality Code</p>	Senior Management Team	<p>End-of-year joint meeting of Academic Committee and Senior Management Team</p> <p>Administrative Committee</p> <p>Staff feedback</p> <p>Timetables for staff workshops</p> <p>Feedback from staff on the impact of the</p>

	<p><i>Section 10: Admissions to higher education</i></p> <p>To map College practice against the Quality Code</p>					<p>workshops</p> <p>Updated policies that reflect the mapping exercise</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> progress the introduction of a formal system of peer review of teaching (paragraph 1.9) 	<p>Introduce formal observation/peer review</p> <p>Provide training for all staff on the expectations with regard to observers and the observed</p> <p>Formalise documentation to support and record the process</p>	<p>April 2013</p> <p>July 2013</p> <p>January 2013 and continuously</p>	<p>Principal/Director of Studies</p> <p>Course Administrator</p>	<p>Peer observation system implemented</p> <p>Staff training completed</p> <p>Documentation completed and in use</p> <p>Positive feedback from participants in peer review</p> <p>Module evaluation by students will be used as evidence of increased satisfaction</p>	<p>Senior Management Team</p>	<p>End-of-year joint meeting of Academic Committee and Senior Management Team</p> <p>Peer evaluation summary</p> <p>Observation reports</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> revise the learning and teaching strategy to reflect the characteristics of the Centre (paragraph 2.4) 	<p>Revise and develop a new improved and centre-focused learning and teaching strategy</p>	<p>April 2013</p>	<p>Principal/Director of Studies and Academic Committee</p>	<p>An independent and well improved Learning and Teaching strategy which reflects accurately the Centre's learning</p>	<p>Senior Management Team</p>	<p>Learning and teaching strategy/policy</p> <p>End-of-year joint meeting of Academic Committee and</p>

				environment		Senior Management Team Internal audit/external consultant report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a formal method of collecting feedback on public information from students, staff and other stakeholders (paragraph 3.4). 	<p>Review sources of feedback on public information</p> <p>Develop a formal procedure to collect feedback from students, staff and other stakeholders (including questionnaires on student induction and staff recruitment, complaint forms, online response form)</p>	<p>May 2013</p> <p>January 2013</p>	<p>Principal/Director of Studies</p> <p>Course Administrator</p> <p>Administrative Committee</p>	<p>Clear procedures to obtain feedback on public information/review of collected feedback of student/staff survey</p>	<p>Senior Management Team</p>	<p>End-of-year joint meeting of Academic Committee and Senior Management Team</p> <p>Public Information Policy of the Centre</p> <p>Administrative Committee</p> <p>Staff and Student Liaison Committee</p> <p>Student feedback</p> <p>Staff feedback</p>

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:

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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