



# **Blake Hall College**

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

November 2012

## Key findings about Blake Hall College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in November 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 University of Greenwich, Glyndŵr University, the Institute of Commercial Management, the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants and Edexcel.

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**:

- the involvement of students, and in particular the Students' Union, in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities (paragraphs 1.10 and 2.2)
- the use of software to support assessment practices and student learning (paragraph 2.9).

## Recommendations

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

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

- continue to develop a systematic and comprehensive monitoring and reporting system for the management of academic standards (paragraphs 1.2, 1.3 and 1.9)
- review and further develop mechanisms for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, including making more effective use of cohort statistics (paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7)
- monitor course handbooks for consistency of content (paragraph 3.5).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)<sup>1</sup> (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Blake Hall 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 University of Greenwich, Glyndŵr University, the Institute of Commercial Management (ICM), the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and Edexcel. The review was carried out by Dr Elizabeth Briggs, Mr Millard Parkinson, Mr Brian Whitehead (reviewers), and Mrs Freda Richardson (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included the partnership agreements, responsibilities checklists, academic policies and procedures, annual review reports, recruitment and admissions documentation, and meetings with staff and students.

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

- subject benchmark statements
- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ)
- *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the Code of practice)
- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), Part C: Information about higher education provision
- ACCA and ICM course details
- Edexcel course details and unit specifications.

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

Blake Hall College (the College) was established in 2001 as an Information Technology College in Wanstead, London, and by 2004 it had developed into a higher education provider. The College is now based in a single campus in Surrey Quays in the London borough of Southwark. In 2006, it became a partner college of the University of Greenwich, and in November 2011 was approved to offer franchised top-up honours degrees in computing and business until August 2015.

In October 2010, the College was also approved as a partner of Glyndŵr University. In April 2011, a sharp rise in student numbers led to an investigation by the UK Border Agency, during which the College was suspended and prevented from recruiting new students. The College was reinstated by the UK Border Agency three months after suspension, with no conditions, and subsequently achieved Highly Trusted Status. However, at the time of the suspension Glyndŵr University gave six months' notice of termination of the partnership agreement. Under the terms of the agreement, this meant that no students could be recruited to these programmes after January 2012. Subsequently, the College negotiated with the University an extension of the recruitment cycle for the MBA. Although the contract officially ended in July 2012, the MBA was allowed to recruit a final cohort of students in May

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4).

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx).

2012. In addition, there are students completing three-year honours degrees in Business Management and in Psychological Studies with Childhood Education with this University.

The College became an accredited Edexcel centre in 2009, offering business, computing, and travel and tourism programmes at levels 4 and 5, and has offered a level 7 extended diploma since 2010. It has also recently commenced delivery of ICM and ACCA programmes.

The College currently has 686 registered students, all of whom are international students studying on full-time courses.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding bodies/organisations, with the number of students currently enrolled shown in brackets:

#### **Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)**

- ACCA Professional programme (73)

#### **Edexcel:**

- BTEC Higher National Diploma in Business (133)
- BTEC Higher National Diploma in Computing and Systems Development (39)
- BTEC Higher National Diploma in Travel and Tourism Management (21)
- BTEC Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership (level 7) (37)

#### **Glyndŵr University (running out)**

- BA (Hons) Business Management (52)
- BA (Hons) Psychological Studies with Childhood Education (19)
- Master's in Business Administration (MBA) (54)

#### **Institute of Commercial Management (ICM)**

- Advanced Diploma in Business Studies (92)
- Graduate Diploma in Business Management (16)
- Advanced Diploma in Marketing Management (39)
- Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Development (18)
- Advanced Diploma in Tourism and Business Studies (18)

#### **University of Greenwich**

- BSc (Hons) Business top-up (level 6) (42)
- BSc (Hons) Computing top-up (level 6) (33)

### **The provider's stated responsibilities**

The responsibilities delegated to the College vary between the awarding bodies and organisations. For the franchised provision offered on behalf of the two universities, the university sets the assessments and has responsibility for moderating; responsibility for marking, second marking and giving feedback to students is delegated to the College. External examiners are appointed and regulated by the policies of the relevant university. For Edexcel provision, the College is responsible for all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, apart from curriculum development; and external examiners are appointed by the awarding organisation. The College has no responsibility for ACCA and ICM summative assessments, which are all based on a final external examination; the responsibility for all marking and moderation, therefore, lies with the awarding organisation. The College is responsible for student admission, guidance and induction for all awarding bodies and

organisations, and also for developing the higher education teaching and assessing skills of staff. Annual monitoring and responding to external examiner reports is shared with the awarding bodies and organisations. In the case of Glyndŵr University, the responsibility for responding to external examiner reports rests with the University; the College is invited to input to the response.

## **Recent developments**

In early 2012, the College entered into merger agreements with three local colleges: LITE College, Guildhall College and Central Greenwich College. As a result of these part-mergers, the College commenced delivery of ACCA and ICM programmes that it had not previously offered. The College is now an approved centre for ICM and is a subscriber to the ACCA tuition provider directory and a computer-based exam centre for ACCA knowledge level papers. It has applied for ACCA Gold Centre approval, which it hopes to achieve imminently. The resultant sudden influx of students and programmes led to significant changes within the higher education provision. The College has appointed an ICM course leader to strengthen academic leadership and has introduced more formal academic management structures and processes, including an Academic Board, to manage the broader and more complex course portfolio.

## **Students' contribution to the review**

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. The student submission was presented in the form of a video. An ex-student, and a current member of staff of the College, helped to develop the video. The member of staff developed the interview questions to fit with the requirements of this review and was responsible for recording and editing the student interviews for the video. The College supported the process by providing the resources required, for example the contact details of student representatives and the filming equipment. The final submission was compiled independently of the College. The video was accompanied by a document that described the process, listed the interview questions and summarised the responses. The student submission was helpful in supporting the review process as it validated evidence found in other sources, such as review visit meetings, documentation and the self-evaluation. Students were also involved in the preparatory meeting with the review coordinator and in the confidential meeting with the team at the review visit.

## Detailed findings about Blake Hall College

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College is satisfactorily fulfilling its delegated responsibilities for the management of academic standards. Since April 2012, the College has restructured its management systems. It now has a Board of Governors and an Academic Board with primary responsibility for academic standards, enhancing the quality of learning opportunities and public information. Both boards are chaired by external, experienced academics working on a part-time/consultancy basis. The Academic Department comprises the course leaders and a recently appointed Director of Studies. The Director reports to the Academic Board and is responsible for the management of standards and the quality of learning opportunities, and for the delivery of the programmes. The immediate monitoring of quality remains with the course leaders, using course committee meetings to evaluate the quality of provision. Information from these meetings is shared with other course leaders during monthly course leader meetings and, as course leaders are members of the Academic Board, action points from course committees are discussed and monitored at the Academic Board.

1.2 The College is in the process of significant change. The Academic Board is in its infancy and has not completed an academic cycle, although there is some evidence of effective management of academic standards. Reporting systems conform to the awarding body and organisation requirements, but internal systems do not yet provide complete oversight for the senior management team. For example, the responsibility for monitoring moderation is currently vested in course leaders. There is no consistent cross-college reporting system for checking the actions that are taking place and their impact.

1.3 Course leaders and their course committees are at the heart of the internal monitoring and reporting system. These committees consider information relating to teaching activities, course success rates, and student feedback. While the Academic Board is increasingly providing a monitoring overview and a forum for decision-making and actions. It is desirable that the College continues to develop a systematic and comprehensive monitoring and reporting system for the management of academic standards.

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

1.4 The College relies heavily on the awarding bodies and organisations for many of its external reference points. Approval and validation events, together with external examination and moderation feedback, ensure that the College meets the requirements of its awarding partners in course delivery. The course content and learning outcomes are provided by the awarding bodies and organisations, and, in all courses programmes apart from Edexcel awards, assessment is also provided by the awarding partners. This ensures compliance with the relevant sections of the Academic Infrastructure and national qualification frameworks.

1.5 There is evidence of engagement with the external reference points, although this is not consistent across the College. The College has recently provided staff development sessions to ensure staff are aware of and use the reference points appropriately, for example in the development and publishing of lesson plans and assessments, and relating them to the appropriate learning outcomes.

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

1.6 For Edexcel courses, the College sets assessments and is responsible for internal verification and moderation. For programmes involving coursework, a sample of student work is second marked internally and externally verified by the awarding body. There are examples of good feedback on assessed work, with clear evidence of second marking, for example on the HND Computing and HND Business Studies.

1.7 The College is very ready to take advice from external sources in order to improve its management of academic standards. Initially, an external consultant was used to design assessment material for the Edexcel courses. More recently, staff have undertaken assessment development sessions with Edexcel. Course leaders, with the Quality Nominee, now produce their own assessment briefs and assessment criteria to meet the intended learning outcomes for each cohort, demonstrating engagement with *Section 6: Assessment of students* of the *Code of practice*. External examiners confirm assignments are well designed and allow feedback against learning outcomes.

1.8 Annual monitoring takes place for franchised university courses, as required by the awarding body and using their prescribed documents and processes. For Edexcel courses, the external examiner report and subsequent follow-up report is used to inform internal quality reviews, although no formal annual monitoring report is produced. Annual monitoring reports for university courses are reviewed by the course leaders and teams, and responded to as required.

1.9 The College does not yet have a formalised system for ensuring that external examiners' reports are dealt with appropriately. Staff confirmed that these reports are made available to them and course leaders have responsibility for addressing issues raised. A systematic and comprehensive monitoring and reporting system for the management of academic standards, as recommended in paragraph 1.3, will strengthen this process.

1.10 The College takes student feedback seriously and has introduced a Staff/Student Liaison Committee and a successful Students' Union. Students' views are collected using a variety of methods; students are encouraged to elect a student representative, who is then given training on how to speak on behalf of their fellow students; surveys are conducted at the end of each module; and the Students' Union conducts independent reviews and surveys to evaluate student needs. Student representatives give informal feedback from their meetings and some students reported seeing actions resulting from their feedback. The Students' Union provides an objective channel of communication through which students can express their views and be involved in the College's decision-making processes.

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 fulfils effectively its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities primarily through the Academic Board. The structures and processes explained in paragraph 1.1 for the management of standards also apply to managing the quality of learning opportunities. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the quality of learning opportunities is achieved through quality assurance procedures, which incorporate student feedback, student complaints and progression information.

2.2 The College is committed to the involvement of students in enhancing learning opportunities. It gathers evidence from student feedback forms, course committees, the Staff/Student Liaison Committee meetings and the independent Students' Union. The Students' Union, which has affiliation to the National Union of Students, plays a full role within the College management structure, and is proactive in seeking a resolution of individual student complaints. It provides students with a formal channel for dialogue, and is valued by them and by staff. There is good practice in the involvement of students, and in particular the Students' Union, in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities.

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

2.3 The use of external reference points is as described for academic standards in paragraph 1.4.

2.4 The College is responsible for policies on student complaints and appeals, plagiarism and academic misconduct, extenuating circumstances and accreditation of prior learning for Edexcel courses. For other provision, the College uses the policies of the awarding bodies and organisations, and this ensures appropriate engagement with the relevant external reference points.

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

2.5 The College has several mechanisms to report on the quality of teaching and learning. The Academic Department is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the student feedback on the quality of teaching and learning. Course leaders monitor assessment profiles for consistency, together with progression data. Information on the quality of teaching and learning is also obtained from feedback from external examiners and from the awarding bodies and organisations. These report favourably on the high levels of student satisfaction with their teaching and learning experience.

2.6 General statistics on recruitment, retention and completion are monitored, although the College has only recently acquired a system to record such statistics routinely and formally. The two universities provide central statistics and the College is aware that it needs to capture similar cohort data for non-university courses. This will provide better information that can be used to further enhance the mechanisms for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

2.7 The College has well qualified teachers, and is committed to support them further through peer observation and staff development activities. The peer observation process is



voluntary, and appreciated as a developmental activity by those staff who participate. Peer review forms are used to record observations and are monitored in individual staff development plans that are maintained by the Human Resources Department. However, there is no formal system to monitor the quality of teaching and learning that feeds into staff appraisal and informs staff development, and no overarching lesson observation scheme or staff development policy. It is desirable for the College to review and further develop mechanisms for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, including making more effective use of cohort statistics.

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

2.8 Course leaders play a pivotal role in supporting students, for example by providing academic guidance on personal development plans and study skills sessions. They also ascertain additional needs for English language support, which is currently provided on a one-to-one basis or in structured group sessions. Special needs support for students with learning difficulties is available on specific request by the Director of Studies, and makes use of a trained professional. Students confirmed that there is a comprehensive and useful induction programme that is reinforced at the beginning of further years of study.

2.9 Students receive assessment details at the start of each course. Formative assessments are submitted and individual feedback is given by staff in timetabled tutorial support sessions. Students in the main submit their work through the plagiarism detection system, which supports internal moderation and tracks student submission dates. The software is also used to provide prompt and easily accessible feedback to students on their work. Students confirmed that this feedback is timely and helpful, and provides constructive suggestions on how to improve. Student views on assessment practices are used to monitor and enhance assessment feedback. The use of software to support assessment practices and student learning is an example of good practice.

2.10 Students commented that they are offered one-to-one tutorials and that staff are very supportive, helpful and dedicated. Timetabled tutorial sessions give students the opportunity to discuss their work and support needs.

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

2.11 All staff undergo induction which includes information on College policies and procedures and on awarding bodies and organisations' expectations. Tutors are given the lecturers' handbook, which outlines teaching staff responsibilities.

2.12 Staff development is managed jointly by the Academic and the Human Resources Departments on an individual basis. The majority of staff hold the basic teacher training qualification - Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector. Recent staff development training has included the applications of plagiarism software, the use of teaching plans, and awarding body and organisation events.

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

2.13 The Academic Department ensures that learning resources are sufficient and accessible. Course leaders make requests for expenditure on resources to the Director of Studies, who then presents these to the Finance Director for approval. The College has a Learning Centre, with a quiet study space and internet access with additional computing

facilities. A computer with large print facilities is available for partially sighted students. There is a small library containing module textbooks, although the students would like more books to be available. All students are able to use local libraries to supplement these resources.

2.14 The virtual learning environment is being updated on a continuing basis to support both student learning and as an information source. The university partners provide their registered students with additional access to online and library resources. The students who met the team were very satisfied with the resources available at the College, and commented that they had wider access to a range of resources in the local area.

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 has an effective system for the production and management of information published about its provision, centred on a Public Information Committee established in September 2012. This is chaired by the Recruitment and Marketing Director and includes any other staff concerned with changes to information. It meets annually or when significant changes to information are to be discussed.

3.2 The Public Information Policy identifies all areas of information about provision, including minimum information required from each course and informed by Part C: Information about higher education provision of the Quality Code. The College is in the process of introducing a media and publication policy, which will expand on some areas. This will include more detailed procedures for the use and monitoring of social media, which the College has identified as an area for further management.

3.3 Prior to admission, students receive comprehensive information from the College website, which includes policies and procedures, information on learning resources, access to awarding body and organisation websites and a virtual tour of the campus. The agents' training manual outlines the responsibilities of agents and policies and procedures they are required to adhere to. Student applicants are usually interviewed in person or using voice-over-internet technology, during which information can be clarified.

3.4 At admission, students receive a course handbook, an academic regulations handbook and the student handbook. The latter contains a broad range of useful information, including processes for requesting meetings with senior staff and applying for letters of confirmation from the College. This is supported by verbal information during induction where students receive module learning plans and details of assessment. Students receive, and are obliged to sign, a student declaration, which outlines the terms and conditions of study at the College and the responsibilities of staff and students.

3.5 Course handbooks are produced by the College or provided by the awarding partners with amendments to make it relevant to College students. Examples of the latter are primarily for university students and contain some information that could be misleading. ACCA and ICM produce generic handbooks and provide additional information on their websites. While students stated that they found handbooks generally useful, there are some

significant differences in format and content. For example, some do not contain information on learning outcomes and how they are to be achieved through assessment. The MBA and Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership handbooks are particularly comprehensive and could be used as exemplars. It is desirable that the College monitors course handbooks for consistency of content.

3.6 The Student Monitoring System provides the College with the ability to manage student data and is also used as a virtual learning environment for students. The intention is that all information should be uploaded to this system but, as yet, information for some courses, for example the HND Travel and Tourism, is not available on the system and hard copies of handbooks are issued to students. The College is aware of this and is taking appropriate action.

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

3.7 There are effective arrangements for monitoring the accuracy and completeness of public information. The Public Information Committee makes decisions about information, which are ratified by the Academic Board, and monitors all information regularly. Responsibility for monitoring course information and academic matters rests with the Director of Studies. Financial information is monitored by the Director of Finance. The Recruitment and Marketing Director monitors the prospectus, website, admissions information and information provided to agents for prospective students. Students indicated that information given to them prior to application was accurate, was backed up by the website and that their experience of study exceeded their expectations.

3.8 Social media sites are used to communicate with students and circulate information. These are carefully monitored by the Marketing and Administration Officer with controls over uploading of information. Further details of use, control and monitoring of social media will be included in the proposed media and publication policy.

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<sup>3</sup>

Blake Hall College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight November 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the involvement of students, and in particular the Students' Union, in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities (paragraphs 1.10 and 2.2)</li> </ul>	<p>Continue involving students in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities through further communication and more direct and regular contact with the Students' Union</p> <p>Regular meetings with the Students' Union President</p> <p>Circulate Student/ Staff Liaison meeting minutes to the Students' Union</p>	<p>First meeting on 8 Feb 2013</p> <p>8 Feb 2013</p>	<p>Director of Studies, Academic Administrative Coordinator, Students' Union President</p>	<p>10% increase in student satisfaction</p> <p>Enhanced sense of ownership</p> <p>20% increase in attendance, retention and completion figures</p>	<p>Executive Committee, Academic Board, students and Students' Union</p>	<p>Annual survey: Student Evaluation of the College</p> <p>Positive comments of students on involvement as stakeholder</p> <p>Analysis of attendance, retention and completion data</p>

<sup>3</sup> 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 bodies and organisations.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the use of software to support assessment practices and student learning (paragraph 2.9).</li> </ul>	<p>Continue using software and provide staff/students with training opportunities to improve their understanding of the software</p> <p>Quarterly training sessions for staff</p> <p>Plagiarism software training for students during induction and study skills classes</p>	<p>16 Jan 2013</p> <p>17 Jan 2013</p>	<p>Recruitment and Admissions, Director of Studies, course leaders and the Edexcel Quality Nominee</p>	<p>Maintaining the same high level of student satisfaction with assessment feedback</p> <p>10% decrease in incidence of plagiarism</p> <p>Students increasingly using plagiarism software to manage their work</p>	<p>Executive Committee, Academic Board, students and Students' Union</p>	<p>Student evaluation of module survey done at the end of each term (highlighting fewer issues of limited feedback)</p> <p>Reduced misconduct cases brought before the Academic Board</p>
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to develop a systematic and comprehensive monitoring and reporting system for the management of academic standards (paragraphs 1.2, 1.3 and 1.9)</li> </ul>	<p>The Administration department will take responsibility for managing moderation and external examiners reports and keeping a log for consistency and reports for management (regarding paragraphs 1.2 and 1.9)</p>	<p>Jun 2013</p>	<p>Director of Studies, Academic Administrative Coordinator, Academic Board and course leaders</p>	<p>Standardised monitoring procedures of moderation process</p> <p>Increased participation in surveys with over 50% of the students completing the surveys</p>	<p>Executive Committee, Academic Board, students and Students' Union</p>	<p>Meeting minutes reflect effective and efficient management systems</p> <p>Awarding bodies and organisations provide positive comments on nature and scope of management practices</p>

	<p>Improved student evolution/feedback survey</p> <p>Review important action points and comments from course committees during management meetings</p>	<p>24 Jan 2013</p> <p>24 Jan 2013</p>		<p>Increased transparency and better monitoring of management of academic standards</p>		<p>Student evaluation survey analyses reflect nature of enhanced student experience</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review and further develop mechanisms for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, including making more effective use of cohort statistics (paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7)</li> </ul>	<p>Update the Student Managing System for generating quarterly reports of recruitment, retention and completion</p> <p>Implement a structured lecturer appraisal system across the college</p> <p>Keeping up to date with the wider higher education context by attending appropriate workshops and conferences</p> <p>Develop and implement a Teaching and Learning Policy</p>	<p>Jun 2013</p> <p>Mar 2013</p> <p>12 Feb 2013</p> <p>Developed by Sept 2013 and implemented by Dec 2013</p>	<p>Academic Administrative Coordinator, Human Resources and Director of Studies</p>	<p>Enhanced quality of learning and teaching</p> <p>Improved student tracking and identification of students in difficulty</p> <p>Successful implementation of the quarterly monitoring report</p> <p>Areas of development have been highlighted and auctioned</p> <p>All staff receive annual appraisals</p>	<p>Executive Committee, Academic Board, Students and Students' Union and course committees</p>	<p>Meeting minutes show enhanced completion figures</p> <p>Student evaluation survey analyses provide positive comments on the Teaching and Learning Policy</p> <p>Enhanced retention and completion statistics</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Policy finalised, implemented and made readily available to all staff</p>

				Teaching and Learning Policy released and successfully implemented		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>monitor course handbooks for consistency of content (paragraph 3.5).</li> </ul>	<p>Develop a consistent course handbook template</p> <p>Develop a consistent module teaching plan template</p> <p>Develop a procedure for monitoring and ensuring that all handbooks and teaching plans are completed using the templates and distributed to students</p>	June 2013	Public Information Committee, Director of Studies and course leaders	<p>Template agreed fits expectations of Academic Infrastructure</p> <p>All handbooks revised and distributed, resulting in consistent handbooks across all courses</p> <p>Responsibility for revisions clarified</p>	Academic Board, Executive Committee and Public Information Committee	<p>Meeting minutes show agreement on consistent focus/content</p> <p>Future management of change structures evident</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](http://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](http://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](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary). Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)<sup>4</sup>

**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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<sup>4</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://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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**The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**

Southgate House  
Southgate Street  
Gloucester  
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000  
Fax 01452 557070  
Email [comms@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:comms@qaa.ac.uk)  
Web [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

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