Bell's College

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

December 2012

Key findings about Bell's College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in December 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 BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT; Education for Business Managers and Administrators and the Institute of Commercial Management.

The team also considers that there can be **no confidence** in how the College manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding organisations.

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

Good practice

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

- the portal provides up-to-date and accurate information on the status of individual students (paragraphs 2.11 and 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 **essential** for the provider to:

- ensure effective strategic oversight of its programmes and the quality of learning opportunities (paragraphs 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2)
- address the high failure rate, including through ensuring students receive detailed and developmental written feedback on their work (paragraphs 2.2 and 2.6).

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

- develop effective processes and coherent quality documentation for the management of quality and standards (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.4)

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

- provide a forum for part-time teaching staff to meet on a regular basis (paragraph 1.4)
- match its policies and procedures with the *Code of practice* (paragraph 2.3)
- adopt a policy for the oversight of social media and for the monitoring of its use (paragraph 3.3)
- continually monitor the accuracy of the information provided to students (paragraph 3.4).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](1) (REO) conducted by [QAA](1) at Bell's College (the provider; the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College 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 College delivers on behalf of the BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT; Education for Business Managers and Administrators and the Institute of Commercial Management. The review was carried out by Dr Glenn Barr, Dr Ana Maria Pascal, Mr Colin Smith (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, meetings with staff and a separate meeting with students.

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

- the Qualifications and Credit Framework
- the requirements of the awarding organisations.

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

Bell's College (the College) was established in 2006 as a private limited company. Initially, the College was located in the Goodmayes district of Ilford. It moved to its present location in Barking, also in East London, in 2009 as a result of an increase in student numbers. The aim of the College is to make high quality education accessible to everyone irrespective of their nationality, culture or ethnic background. The College employs part-time staff to deliver most of the teaching. Representatives in a number of countries help with student recruitment. The College occupies two floors within a large multi-use commercial building. It has Investors in People accreditation.

There are no subject-specific academic departments and courses are coordinated through the Director of Studies who heads the Academic Department. The Dean oversees the administrative function with a separate department dealing with marketing and admissions. The Director of Studies and the Dean report to the Chief Executive Officer, who is also the Director of Operations. Enrolment in the academic year 2012-13 totals 79. All students are full-time and are all from overseas.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations with student numbers in brackets:

BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT (BCS)
- Certificate in Information Technology (1)
- Diploma in Information Technology (3)

Education for Business Managers and Administrators (EBMA)
- Diploma in Health and Social Care (2 recruited for start in January 2013)

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

Institute of Commercial Management (ICM)
- Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Finance (2)
- Advanced Diploma in Business Studies (7)
- Graduate Diploma in Business Management (45)
- Graduate Diploma in Management Studies (4)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Management (15)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College has the responsibility for recruitment and admissions and also for the provision of appropriate resources, teaching and student support. It is responsible for the majority of information provided to students, although the awarding organisations provide much of the programme and module material. The awarding organisations set and mark all the summative assessments. The College's role is to provide formative assessments to enhance learning and to prepare students for the requirements of the awarding organisations. It gives the results of summative assessments, provided by the awarding organisations, to the students.

Recent developments

The number of students at the College has decreased from 106 in the academic year 2011-12. The College advertises a considerable number of programmes in its prospectus from a variety of awarding organisations, although whether they run depends on student demand. It reserves the right to close an existing course if the number of students becomes too low to be viable. Therefore the courses delivered by the College may vary considerably over an academic year. The College did have a developmental engagement within the REO process that commented on college-selected aspects of the provision within a report that was not published.

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 November 2012. The submission was written by one student who tried to reflect the views of the others. However, no explanation was provided as to how these views were collected. The student submission covers a limited number of topics. Students met the review coordinator at the preparatory meeting and the team during the review. Their involvement was helpful for the team and provided an insight into a number of topics including the information given to them by the College and the nature of student support.

Detailed findings about Bell's College

1   Academic standards

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

1.1   The College has clear responsibilities concerning the qualifications it delivers on behalf of its awarding organisations. Under the terms of the agreements, the awarding organisations retain overall responsibility for the management of academic standards. ICM and BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, provide programme specifications and set and mark assessments and examinations. Similar arrangements will be relevant for the EBMA course which has recruited two students and is due to start in January 2013. The College is preparing for the possible introduction of Edexcel programmes.

1.2   The College's management structure is proportionate for its small size, with a core of staff performing many roles within the organisation. The Chief Executive Officer, who is also the Director of Operations, is responsible for strategic development, resources and admissions. The Director of Studies has responsibility for academic matters. The Dean is involved in the overall supervision of all departments. Reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Studies, supported by the Course Coordinator, manages all the courses.

1.3   The College has few responsibilities for the oversight and maintenance of academic standards because of the arrangements described in paragraph 1.1. The senior committee of the College is the Steering Committee, described in the Staff Handbook as making 'all important and sensitive organizational decisions..' and being '...responsible for monitoring of overall operations of the organization.' However, neither this Committee, nor any other body in the College, has explicit responsibility for the strategic oversight of academic standards. Steering Committee minutes do not show discussions at a strategic level concerning the planning and preparation for new courses. For example, there is little detailed consideration of the resourcing implications. The College has a large number of awards on offer but not currently running. No formal procedures in preparation for the running of these courses are evident in Steering Committee minutes. The College intends to run the Diploma in Health and Social Care starting in January 2013 but at the time of the review did not have the required approval for the teaching staff from the awarding organisation.

1.4   There are limited opportunities for teaching staff to discuss curriculum issues and share good practice. In addition to Steering Committee meetings, formal staff meetings are held approximately four times a year for a variety of purposes. Some meetings are for management and administrative staff and concern such matters as departmental plans or the records system. Other meetings are for College management to inform staff of their duties or review their performance. Teaching staff do not meet as members of course teams to discuss curriculum issues, assessment strategies or share good practice. Apart from two members of the management team, all teachers are part-time and only meet informally when their attendance at the College coincides. It is desirable for the College to provide a forum for part-time teaching staff to meet on a regular basis.

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

1.5   The College's relies on its awarding organisations to take into account relevant external reference points. Programme specifications are provided by the awarding organisations. The College has not engaged explicitly with the Academic Infrastructure.

For example, it has not mapped its formative assessment practice against the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*)*, Section 6: Assessment of students.*

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

1.6 The College complies with the assessment requirements of its awarding organisations. The awarding organisations set and mark summative assessments. The College provides the venue and the invigilation for examinations and follows the correct procedures and staffing for secure examination practices.

1.7 The College currently does not have a process for the internal moderation of formatively assessed written work to ensure that the assessments are appropriate, at the correct level and that feedback is developmental. However, an internal verification process is being developed for Edexcel courses that may run in the future. Consequently, the staff evaluation process only considers students' views on the suitability of assessment and feedback, without peer or management judgements (see paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6). The College currently relies on checks by management on the schemes of work to reassure itself that staff are teaching to the appropriate level.

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

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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's management of the quality of learning opportunities is not systematic or effective. The Steering Committee is responsible for oversight of the provision. However, its powers and reporting lines are not defined by terms of reference or clear responsibilities for standards and quality. Meetings are not called according to a cycle of business but in response to issues. Any member of the committee may call and chair a meeting. The frequency of meetings and nature of business discussed demonstrate a reactive and superficial approach. Minutes are brief, lack clear and allocated actions, and do not have target completion dates. Out of the seven meetings of the Steering Committee since May 2012, four focused on individual staff performance issues, one considered a student disciplinary issue, one the observation of teaching and one looked at results. Some areas, for example admissions, induction and pastoral support, are effectively managed. However, the minutes of the Steering Committee and the Staff Committee, and discussions with staff show a lack of a holistic process of systematic monitoring and review of the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities. Much of the oversight is reactive, rather than proactive, and recorded in purely descriptive, rather than analytic, terms. There is an emphasis on the operational rather than the strategic. For example, there is a lack of detailed consideration of the development, monitoring and impact of policies relating to learning, teaching and assessment in the context of a number of students leaving the College without completing their courses.

2.2 There are no coherent and embedded procedures for review activities at an institutional level. While the College engages with student views, the College does not undertake detailed annual monitoring and review of individual courses or the overall

performance of courses. The College has no formalized system of analysing withdrawal or pass rates. It does not consider results by course, percentage or examine trends over time. Results show high levels of failure and non-attendance on individual modules for the Institute of Commercial Management's March and June examinations. Only one Steering Committee meeting discussed student results in May 2012 with no evidence of consideration of the June examination series at the time of the review. Discussion at the May meeting lacked detailed analysis and action planning. Recorded analysis was limited to '… a mixture of good and poor which leaves us with average', while action was limited to the Dean meeting teachers to offer advice. It is essential for the College to ensure effective strategic oversight of its programmes and the quality of learning opportunities.

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

2.3 The College relies on the requirements of its awarding organisations for its external reference points. It has not engaged with the *Code of practice* in its formulation and implementation of policies and procedures to manage and enhance learning opportunities for students. It is desirable for the College to match its policies and procedures with the *Code of practice.*

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

2.4 College policies on teaching and learning are not comprehensive. It does not have a single policy or strategy document covering all aspects of teaching and learning. There are a number of policies which cover particular areas, for example, staff development, examinations and equal opportunities. All of these are included in the Staff Handbook. This Handbook lacks clarity and effective guidance for academic staff. The College provided a recently updated version of the Staff Handbook during the review with some additions. The Staff Handbook is designed for all staff at the College whatever their role. Information for teachers in the Handbook relates to a list of their duties and procedures with little guidance on academic matters such as learning outcomes, levels of achievement or effective assessment and feedback practices. The focus of the Staff Handbook is the job descriptions of named individuals rather than on providing clear processes in a number of important areas. There are also departmental manuals setting out relevant procedures and providing more detail about the duties of post holders. For example, the Dean's department manual describes the College attendance policy and details the responsibilities of the Assistant Dean, a post not currently filled. There is considerable overlap between the departmental manuals and the Staff Handbook without providing additional guidance on important areas including assessment and achievement. The College does not have a document which unifies the disparate documents or codifies its approach to quality management. It is advisable for the College to develop effective processes and coherent quality documentation for the management of academic quality and standards.

2.5 The College has useful mechanisms that provide feedback on teaching. The College has a teaching observation scheme and obtains feedback from students through module questionnaires. Data from these sources are collated to provide information about the quality of teaching. In two cases, evidence of poor teaching has been identified through this process. This was discussed at a Staff Committee meeting and the contracts of the individuals involved were not renewed. Students reported that the teaching has been good except from one of the individuals whose contract had not been renewed.

2.6 Feedback to students on their formative work is poor. The College has no formal policy providing detailed guidance on the nature and scope of the feedback to be given to

students on their work. The College provides formative assessments to prepare students for the summative assessments provided by the awarding organisations. As indicated in paragraph I.7, the College does not internally verify these formative assessments. The College provided the team with examples of student work from the Institute of Commercial Management awards which were in the form of mock examinations. The marked scripts are returned to the students who reported that they were not always clear how marks were allocated. The annotation of the scripts included almost no comment that could help students understand any errors they had made or produce better work in the future. Students do not receive written, or recorded, comments explicitly linked to the assessment criteria or the learning outcomes. The College has indicated its intention to introduce written feedback on the formative assignments. Summative assessment statistics indicate a substantial number of failures. The Steering Committee has not engaged in detailed formal analysis of failure rates across modules and courses nor examined the possible effects of the lack of written feedback on student success. While students receive some verbal feedback on their formative work, the lack of recorded feedback does not help students to prepare for their summative assessments. It is essential for the College to address the high failure rate, including through ensuring students receive detailed and developmental written feedback on their work.

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

2.7   The College has a comprehensive induction which students reported is helpful and comprehensive. At induction, students are asked to sign a declaration form to confirm that they have received and understood the relevant policies and procedures about the College and their course.

2.8   The College has various systems in place for providing student support in a helpful way. It offers pastoral support and counselling facilities through a formal tutorial system. Students are assigned a personal tutor whom they must see at least once per semester and with whom they can meet as often as they require. Follow-up notes are posted onto the College's online database and sent to the student by email after each meeting. Students confirmed that tutors make themselves available at short notice and that they find the system helpful. A progress report on each student's performance is compiled at the end of the semester. The staff use it as a means of giving feedback to students about their progress. The College provides support to students in addition to the prescribed curriculum, for example, in creative writing and English language. Students find this support helpful.

2.9   The College has a suitable system for collecting student opinions. As well as module questionnaires, students provide feedback on their experience at the College through their representatives, a suggestion box and opportunities to sign a collective petition. Students reported that their suggestions are properly considered. For example, a complaint about an individual lecturer resulted in their contract not being renewed.

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

2.10   The College has adequate arrangements for staff recruitment and development. Some staff have attended training provided by the present awarding organisations and also a prospective awarding body. This training has included guidance on examination invigilation, presentation skills and assessment for Edexcel courses. Part-time members of staff, who undertake most of the teaching, are largely responsible for their own subject-specific staff development. The College ensures that they are suitably qualified by consideration of their qualifications and experience. The staff are expected to have a teaching qualification. The College is funding the Dean and the Director of Studies to

undertake postgraduate awards. The College has a system of staff evaluation and appraisal based on teaching observations and feedback from students. The information is analysed in the Dean's Department. Discussions with individual lecturers, and decisions about staff contract renewal or termination, are part of the staff evaluation process. The analysis by the Dean's Department provides staff with useful information on where they might improve.

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   Learning resources are appropriate for the provision. Information technology and physical resources are suitable in nature and scope for the present courses. Library resources have been updated recently as a result of students' requests. Students also have access to extensive online resources provided by the awarding organisations. They have access to an online portal, which provides them with up-to-date information about the College and their courses. The portal also has a section that is specific to each individual student allowing personal records to be included. The College has an efficient online database, which is used by staff to update student records and provide much of the data on the portal. The portal also includes materials to support teaching on individual modules. Students stated that they are satisfied with the learning resources available to them.

> The review team has **no 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 College's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?

3.1   The College produces some useful information for potential students. The website is the main source of information for potential applicants. It has extensive guidance on matters such as course fees, admission procedures, studying in the UK, and the course structures. It has signposted links to the awarding organisations' websites to provide further detail. There are also links to the websites of awarding bodies providing potential progression routes. The website includes a large number of courses that are not running, with the College using student responses to gauge demand. A paper-based prospectus is available. It provides the same course information as the website. Overseas students can obtain additional information about the College from local consultants recognised by the British Council and the British Accreditation Council and at the College's own regional office in Pakistan.

3.2   The College uses the portal as a valuable means of providing information to its current students. The portal can be accessed worldwide and is web-based. It has a link with the College's online database that ensures that information about individual students is accurate and current. Students can assess information specific to them on a number of important areas including attendance, fees status and assignment grades. Students report that they find this aspect of the portal particularly valuable. The use of the portal to provide up-to-date information specific to individual students is good practice. The portal also provides course-specific information including the timetable, examination registration dates, the examination timetable and information on assignments. The College publishes a handbook for all students which is available on the portal. The Handbook provides adequate

guidance on College regulations and procedures. The College relies mainly on the awarding organisations for the course and module materials, which are sometimes uploaded onto the portal or are available electronically from the awarding organisations' website. There is little contextualisation of these materials for the delivery of these courses at the College. Students reported that the information they received before arrival and while at the College has been accurate.

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

3.3   The responsibilities for the accuracy and completeness of most public information are clearly designated. The College has a publishing policy that covers the currency, tracking and approval of information available on its website, portal and through agents. The Dean and the Director of Studies are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public information. The Chief Executive Officer is involved in the process when approval for financial matters is required. The Admissions Officer is responsible for informing the consultants about any changes to the guidance for students overseas. However, there is no formal policy for the management of information provided through social media. The College is using social media websites for messaging purposes, to offer discussion boards and promote the interactive exchange of ideas. Students use these opportunities extensively. The College provides students with little formal guidance on the proper use of its social media sites. College-related use of social media is monitored by the Chief Executive Officer, with an informal set of processes emerging for safeguarding issues. It is desirable for the College to adopt a policy for the oversight of social media and the monitoring of its use.

3.4   Public information is generally accurate and complete although at the time of the review there were two cases of material requiring updating. The College was advertising a top-up degree linking it to the University of the West of England, Bristol as the awarding body, which is no longer correct. Information about the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants course had not been adjusted for overseas students in light of the most recent UK Border Agency regulations as they affect the College. It is desirable for the College to continually monitor the accuracy of the information provided to students.

3.5   Students have been involved in assuring the accuracy and completeness of information, although this is on an informal basis. They have provided feedback by contacting the Admissions Department or the Director of Studies about possible improvements to the information that the College supplies. They reported that staff are very willing to receive and act on these suggestions. For example, student feedback resulted in the addition of more information about fees on the website.

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]

Bell's College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight December 2012						
Good practice	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The review team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College.						
• the portal provides up-to-date and accurate information on the status of individual students (paragraphs 2.11 and 3.2).	To involve staff and teachers in making best use of the customer relationship management system, update and upload all information on time	One week before start and one week after end of every semester	Academic department	Management of the customer relationship management system and availability of appropriate information available to both staff and students	Director of Studies	Steering Committee during a post-term meeting
Essential	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **essential** for the College to:						
• ensure effective strategic oversight of its programmes and the quality of	Director of Studies calls a Steering Committee meeting to discuss planned courses, teachers,	Start of March	Director of Studies/ Academic Department	Terms of reference included in staff hand book and Director of Studies/Academic	Dean	Steering Committee during a post/ pre-term meetings

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[3] The College 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 College's awarding organisations.

learning opportunities (paragraphs 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2)	targets for the term, recommendations/ courses approved In a separate meeting, Director of Studies informs the teachers about expectations (College's and awarding bodies') including feedback on formative assessment (dates, and modes of assessment agreed) External terms of reference and resourcing are discussed The teachers (and staff) are informed about last term's aggregate results and students' feedback (evaluation), also the teachers are informed about the College's expectations in regard to the exam session	Beginning of spring term Start of June and beginning of July	(Aggregate and students evaluations are prepared by Dean's department)	Department manual Minutes of meetings, resolutions and copies of aggregate student results and evaluations Samples of teachers' feedback on students' work Record of feedback given to all students Written conclusions/ recommendations regarding aggregate student results and evaluations		

| | | Inquiries are answered and requests noted

A week after the term: Director of Studies calls a meeting first of the Steering Committee (briefing, analysis of data, sets up standards for students (sets up course requirements, pre-requisites, proposes courses for pending term, recommendations) and then with the teachers in a separate meeting, discusses which targets have been met, which ones not, evaluates feedback given to (and by) students, informs the teachers about the latest news in regard to pending external exams and initially planned courses for the next term | | | | |
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• address the high failure rate, including through ensuring students receive detailed and developmental written feedback on their work (paragraphs 2.2 and 2.6).	Before start of semester Director of Studies meets with all teachers to brief them about the expectations of College and the awarding bodies, including assessment methods and feedback Minutes are produced, feedback forms (to be given to students) are already with teachers The assessment will then be internally verified by Director of Studies using the internal verification form	Internal verifier report to be produced within first week of the end of semester	Director of Studies	Minutes/decisions/ recommendations Formative assessment results and internal verifier reports	Dean	Steering Committee during a post term meeting
	Steering Committee meets annually, analyses pass rates and withdrawals, considers results by course, exam results, puts forward recommendations	December 2013	Steering Committee	Written report/ recommendations	Chief Executive Officer	Chief Executive Officer

	The Dean's department carries out a thorough quality assurance checks and provides recommendations	End of March and end of June	Dean	Recommendations put forward/action plan/amendment implemented/ arranged	Director of Studies	Steering Committee post-term meeting
Advisable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the College to:						
• develop effective processes and coherent quality documentation for the management of academic quality and standards (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.4).	The staff handbook [Section 3.12] to be complemented in regard to academic staff duties such as learning outcomes, levels of achievement or effective assessment and feedback practices Relevant information (forms, course details and so on) are handed out to teachers during a pre-semester meeting. Every semester these are kept in teachers' files	The end of March and end of June (summer term)	Director of Studies	New version of Staff Handbook published	Dean	Steering Committee during pre-term meeting

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Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is **desirable** for the College to:						
• provide a forum for part-time teaching staff to meet on a regular basis (paragraph 1.4)	To produce a college newsletter, a forum for the College/part-time academic staff to share ideas Before start of semester Director of Studies meets with all teachers to brief about the expectations of the College and the awarding bodies, including assessment methods The teachers can share their views and recommendations during this meeting and also during the post semester meeting with the Dean	End of March second week of March 2013 for pre-semester meeting, feedback meeting with the Dean within one week from the end of the semester	Director Studies and Dean	New version of newsletter distributed Minutes and action plans produced as a result of both meetings	Chief Executive Officer	Steering Committee post and pre-semester meetings
• match its policies and procedures with	All departments need to use the	22/03/13	All departments	Submission of related documents	Dean	Steering Committee pre-

the *Code of practice* (paragraph 2.3)	*Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*) for review of the documents they are responsible for, for example: Marketing and admissions should check public information sources like prospectus, website and so on according to the *Code of practice* and make appropriate amendments					semester meeting
• adopt a policy for the oversight of social media and for the monitoring of its use (paragraph 3.3)	Marketing and admissions oversee all sources of information on regular basis and mention this in periodic business plan; they periodically, a week after the end of term, produce reports	Two weeks prior to start of semester	Marketing and admissions	Submission of related documents	Dean	Steering Committee pre-semester meeting
• continually monitor the accuracy of the information provided to students	Marketing, admissions and Academic Department oversee	Two weeks prior to start of	Marketing admissions and academic department	Submission of related documents	Dean	Steering Committee post-semester meeting

| (paragraph 3.4). | all sources of information including the Staff Handbook and department Manuals on regular basis

Refer to this in periodic business plans and report to Dean | semester | | | | |
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About QAA

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

QAA's aims are to:

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

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

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

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

Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies
a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected
of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education
Colleges 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 College 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 Colleges 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.

College 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 Colleges 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.