

## **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

### **Summative review**

April 2010

Brooksby Melton College

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## **Preface**

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education.

As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

## **Purpose of IQER**

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

## **The IQER process**

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

## **Developmental engagement**

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college
- an optional written submission by the student body
- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit
- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days
- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education
- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

## Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams, however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

## Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents
- reviewing the optional written submission from students
- asking questions of relevant staff
- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*
- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects
- *Guidelines for preparing programme specifications*, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study
- award benchmark statements, which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

## Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential**, **advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.
- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence**, **limited confidence** or **no confidence**. There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published.

Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body(ies) as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

## Executive summary

### The Summative review of Brooksby Melton College carried out in April 2010

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreement(s), for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

### Good practice

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

- The Mapping Document is a robust mechanism for the effective monitoring of the use of the Academic Infrastructure in the higher education programmes.
- The showcasing of students' work in performing arts is supported by the use of e-portfolios and a website. The virtual learning environment offers continuous anonymous feedback throughout the year and for audio and visual feedback on filmed evidence of students' work.
- The work-based and placement learning guidelines for students, staff and employers provides a clear guide for this form of learning.
- The staff development activity in the performing arts is directly relevant for higher education.
- The enterprising activity and fund raising of the performing arts team to enhance the students' learning opportunities.

### 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 **advisable** for the College to:

- produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education programmes to provide an overview of its provision and facilitate the dissemination of good practice.

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

- modify the observation of teaching to make more reference to learning and teaching in higher education
- explore the development and implementation of a mechanism to facilitate the gathering, evaluation and monitoring of sector-wide employer information and the sharing of good practice in employer engagement
- make clear that any information on residual websites is no longer valid
- ensure that the performing arts handbook is used as a template for all College higher education handbooks.

## A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Brooksby Melton College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of De Montfort University and the University of Lincoln. The review was carried out by Mr Maldwyn Buckland, Ms Catherine Fairhurst and Mr Dan Morgan (reviewers), and Philip Markey (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review*, (the handbook) published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College and awarding bodies, meetings with staff, students, employers and partner institutions, reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)*, subject and award benchmark statements, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ), and programme specifications.

3 In order to assist HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree (FD) awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the FD programmes delivered at the College.

4 Brooksby Melton College is a further education college with some higher education provision. It was formed from the merger of Brooksby College with Melton College in 2000. It operates on three main sites: Brooksby and Melton Campuses, and King St in Melton Mowbray. Performing arts is based at King St where there are dance studios and performance spaces. It also has its own 350-seater theatre on the Melton campus. Animal Welfare and Management is based at Brooksby which is an 850-acre estate with a working farm and equestrian and plant centres. The College is an active participant in the regional lifelong learning network and has partnerships in the community such as the Motion House Dance Theatre Company.

5 There are 3,000 students on further education programmes and 105 full-time equivalent students on the higher education programmes. All the students are full-time. On the performing arts programmes there are 79 full-time equivalent students and 36 are on the FdSc Animal Welfare and Management programme.

6 The College offers the following programmes:

### Validated by De Montfort University

- BA (Hons) Performing Arts (68)
- FdA Performing Arts in the Community (11)
- Leadership, Management and Enterprise (with a University Certificate in Professional Development) UCPD

### **Validated by the University of Lincoln**

- FdSc Animal Management and Welfare (36).

### **Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies**

7 The College works with two awarding bodies, De Montfort University since 1994 and the University of Lincoln since 2007. The provision is funded indirectly.

### **Recent developments in higher education at the College**

8 The College has undergone significant changes to its management and support structures since September 2008. Since then, the College has developed a management and reporting structure for its higher education provision. Central to this is the Higher Education Committee, chaired by the Head of Learning who is responsible for higher education. This committee reports to the College's Quality and Standards Committee. There are plans to develop Foundation Degrees in Equine Management, Film and Video Production and Dance for 2010-11. The College has produced a Higher Education Strategy and Improvement Plan. It has recently produced a revised accommodation strategy which will involve the reconfiguration of the of the Melton Campus and the establishment of a Performing Arts Academy, and new facilities for Animal Management and Welfare at the Brooksby Campus.

### **Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission**

9 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the team. Students from all the programmes produced a written submission assisted by members of the Students' Union and student representatives. The written submission was helpful to the team and it identified several areas where the College had improved the provision. Students were generally positive and the team was able to discuss any concerns they had at their meeting with them.

## **B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education**

### **Core theme 1: Academic standards**

**How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

10 The College has undergone a series of changes in leadership and management. In response to being placed under a Financial Improvement Plan by the further education funding body it has implemented significant changes to both management and support structures in an effort to reduce the staffing budget and streamline the management process. This Financial Improvement Plan has now been removed and, since September 2008, the College has not only secured the viability of its core further education business, but also confirmed its commitment to maintaining and developing its higher education provision.

11 The Developmental engagement in March 2009 concluded that the College was required to address a series of essential, advisable and desirable recommendations. Its Higher Education Improvement Plan notes some progress has been made to meet these recommendations. The College, however, acknowledges that substantive progress has been limited due to the timing and impact of the restructuring. The team acknowledges the need

to address the wider issues facing the College as a whole to ensure the continued stability of higher education provision. The College confirms that it values higher education provision which is seen as fundamental to future developments. This is reflected in the increased commitment to both human and physical resources. There is a marked change from the time of the Developmental engagement as evidenced by the introduction of new senior posts including a member of the Governing Body in the role of the Higher Education Champion and a Head of Learning to provide leadership and management of higher education.

12 The College, organised across three main sites, is managed by the Senior Executive Team consisting of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Head of Finance, Head of Organisation Development, Head of Learning and the Head of Land-Based and Learner Services. The Head of Learning is the senior manager responsible for the management of higher education standards and quality and, as Chair of the new Higher Education Committee, reports directly to the College's Quality and Standards Committee. The Head of Learning is also a member of the Senior Management Team which meets weekly to discuss strategic and operational matters. The Principal also reports directly to the Quality and Standards Committee on all matters relating to both further and higher education issues.

13 The Developmental engagement team considered it essential for the College to implement, as soon as possible, its plans for a structure and process for the college-level management of its higher education provision, particularly with regard to the management of standards. In response to this recommendation the College has recently introduced a revised reporting mechanism and committee structure for the consideration of higher education matters. This structure includes strategic and operational groups. Central to the management of standards and quality of higher education is the implementation of the new Higher Education Committee, whose primary role is the monitoring and consideration of all matters relating to higher education. The implementation of this committee and the Higher Education Improvement Plan has enabled the development of a cross-college approach to the review of academic standards. The plan provides monitoring information on external examiner reports, student feedback and good practice. The Head of Learning reports directly to the Quality and Standards Committee which is a subgroup of the Governing Body. The Committee also reports to, and receives recommendations from, both awarding body partners.

14 To involve students in the quality management process the College has introduced the Higher Education Student Forum which enables the expression of views by students on a range of issues. Actions from this forum proceed to the Higher Education Committee and where appropriate, in cases of resource management, will be considered by the Senior Management Team. Students said that representatives attend on a regular basis and it is clear that issues raised are followed up by staff.

15 The Developmental engagement report highlighted the need to strengthen the method of monitoring and managing the quality of individual annual reviews and action plans to identify and address variations in self-assessment procedures. It was noted that the target for implementation is stated as December 2009, but the team found that a single cross-college annual higher education report has not yet been produced, while it is recognised that there are curriculum area reports produced annually. The team, while acknowledging that the College has focused its efforts in addressing the primary essential recommendation, nonetheless confirmed the necessity to ensure this procedure is implemented. The College is advised to produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education programmes to provide an overview of its provision and facilitate the dissemination of good practice. The Higher Education Committee and the Senior Management Team should take account of this report.

16 The Developmental engagement made positive comments about the assessment process, and, in particular, the internal verification process. The College's internal verification procedures assure the internal moderation of all higher education programmes with assignments being checked for compliance with procedures. Module descriptors ensure effective coverage of learning outcomes and their links with assessments. Staff are knowledgeable about the verification procedures and are able to articulate the function of the verification process. Programme teams make thorough responses to recommendations by external examiners. For example, the 2008-09 external examiner's report for the FdSc Animal Management and Welfare programme confirmed that while there was some improvement in internal moderation and double-marking, actions identified by the internal moderator were not always completed. In addition, it was noted that there was a need for the consistent use of standardised assignment briefs and verification documentation. The programme team has responded to this requirement by providing standardised briefs.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

17 The Developmental engagement recommended that staff needed to be more familiar with the Academic Infrastructure. The College's professional development activities and the work of the awarding bodies have ensured that staff now have an understanding of the Academic Infrastructure and are kept abreast of any changes. FdSc Animal Management and Welfare staff have attended the annual staff development conference at the University of Lincoln, addressing issues of assessment, plagiarism and how to use the Academic Infrastructure. De Montfort University has provided training relating on the Academic Infrastructure which has included attendance by the College's learner services and marketing staff. It has also delivered a specific Academic Infrastructure session to the College's Senior Management Team (see also paragraph 24).

18 Recent validations made full reference to the Academic Infrastructure. The College, in conjunction with its awarding bodies, has produced a Mapping Document that tracks the *Code of practice*, published by QAA. This comprehensively outlines where the relevant parts of the Academic Infrastructure apply and provides a central reference source for the monitoring of standards and quality assurance. The team notes that the Mapping Document is a robust mechanism for the effective monitoring of the use of the Academic Infrastructure in higher education programmes and is an area of good practice.

### **How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?**

19 The College has formal partnership agreements with De Montfort University and the University of Lincoln. There are clear statements regarding the respective responsibilities. The relationships are strengthened by the effective communications between the universities and the two programme areas in the College. The awarding bodies produce annual reviews with recommendations that are acted upon by the College. There is a supportive and productive collaboration between awarding body link tutors from both universities and College staff, facilitating the development of a shared understanding of partner responsibilities. This ensures that procedures for higher education quality assurance and enhancement are matched to awarding body requirements. The Chair of the Higher Education Committee is also responsible for communicating the outcomes of the Higher Education Committee to the College's Quality and Standards Committee and the College's Senior Management Team. Teams meet with the university assessment boards. They also meet with external examiners to discuss standards and quality and action plans (see also paragraph 22).

**What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standard(s)?**

20 The College's Higher Education Strategy confirms a commitment to the provision of relevant and supportive internal staff development and training to meet the needs of higher education staff. At programme level, a formal appraisal procedure is in place to assist in the identification of bespoke training requirements. Programme team managers implement individual action plans informed by lesson observation feedback and criteria from the Area Improvement Plan, including external examiners reports and outcomes of Higher Education Committee evaluations. Formal requests for staff development support are presented to the College's Resources Management Group, made up of senior managers, where decisions are considered for approval. The team confirms that the College has a strong track record of supporting the continuing professional development needs of staff, including the acquisition of higher qualifications. Currently, the College is supporting two PhDs and a master's qualification in the performing arts area, and staff teaching on the FdSc Animal Management and Welfare have undertaken Advanced Practitioners qualifications in addition to accessing a variety of occupationally-relevant and academic opportunities (see also paragraph 32).

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.**

**Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities**

**How are responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities for higher education programmes delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

21 The general responsibilities and arrangements for managing and reporting on the quality of learning opportunities are those described for academic standards in paragraphs 10 to 14. The College has a clear management and reporting structure for learning opportunities with well-defined roles and responsibilities. The awarding body agreements clearly identify the College's responsibilities for the management of learning opportunities. The Head of Learning, line managed by the Assistant Principal, is the senior manager responsible for higher education learning opportunities. The Head of Learning is a member of the Senior Management Team which meets weekly to discuss strategic and operational matters of the College, including learning opportunities. The College developed an Improvement and Recovery Plan in 2008-09 and the recently developed management and support structures make clear reference to learning opportunities. The Higher Education Committee, chaired by the Head of Learning, and consisting of representatives of academic staff, senior managers, support staff and the two universities, has standard agenda items for learning opportunities. The Higher Education Strategy also includes references to learning opportunities.

**How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding bodies to ensure students receive appropriate learning opportunities?**

22 The arrangements through which the College ensures it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding bodies are set out in the partnership agreements. The College is responsible for admissions, student support, learning resources, learning and teaching, and setting and marking student work. Learning opportunities are systematically considered as part of programme approval and review events with follow-up meetings to check that the conditions of approval have been met. The awarding bodies approve staff teaching on

higher education programmes. The Chair of the Higher Education Committee has responsibility for ensuring the requirements of the partnership agreements are implemented and attends the collaborative partnership steering groups (see also paragraph 19).

23 The College also works with De Montfort University through the regional Lifelong Learning Networks in Creative and Media and Health. This has resulted in successful funding bids for the development and marketing of the FdA Performing Arts in the Community (see also paragraph 32).

**What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

24 The Developmental engagement recommended as advisable that staff should be encouraged to become more familiar with the Academic Infrastructure and any changes should be communicated to them. The College, with the awarding bodies, has ensured that this recommendation has been met. The Academic Infrastructure underpins the Higher Education Committee’s terms of reference. The design and approval of programmes take account of the FHEQ and, in the case of the recently approved FdA in Performing Arts in the Community and the FdA Creative Leadership and Management, the relevant sections of the *Code of practice* and the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark* were clearly referenced. Learning opportunities are considered in annual monitoring reports by the awarding bodies and, for the College’s work-based learning documents, reference is made to the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning* (see also paragraphs 17 and 18).

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

25 The College does not have a learning and teaching strategy specifically for higher education. Programme specifications presented during the validation process include a section on learning and teaching. Students are provided with information on learning and teaching in programme handbooks. The College has a number of mechanisms in place to assure itself of the quality of learning and teaching, including staff appraisal and a subsequent action plan, observation of teaching and student perception feedback including annual programme reviews. The observation scheme forms a key component of the College’s quality process. The College recognises that this is based in further education and that it needs to take account of higher education. It is recommended as desirable that the observation of teaching is modified to make more reference to learning and teaching in higher education.

26 There are comprehensive mechanisms for gathering student evaluations of learning and teaching, including the Higher Education Student Forum with a standard agenda item. Student feedback questionnaires for individual modules and annual programme evaluations are also used. The evaluations and the team’s meetings with students, indicate that students are satisfied with the learning and teaching. The students stated that teaching is challenging, interesting and informative.

27 Programme staff make effective use of their links with the performing arts and animal management professions to enhance learning and teaching. There are close relationships with local and national performance groups and the community sector to contribute to the development and delivery of performing arts programmes. In animal management and welfare, staff are able to bring their extensive links to the industry to learning and teaching. Students said that staff in both programme areas display their professional expertise and

experience in class sessions. Learning and teaching in animal management and welfare are enhanced by visits to animal management organisations and especially by annual visits to Africa.

28 At a meeting with employers representing both the performance arts and animal management industries, the team was told about the high quality of the students in terms of their commitment and ability to apply their knowledge. The College is engaged in making links with employers and sees its higher education development being focused on the needs of industry. This is particularly evident in the College's strategic development proposals for new higher education programmes. Given its commitment to developing higher education provision, the College may wish to strengthen its approach to employer engagement to enhance students' learning experiences. The team recommends as desirable that the College explores the development and implementation of a mechanism to facilitate the gathering, evaluation and monitoring of sector-wide employer information and the sharing of good practice in employer engagement.

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

29 The students confirmed that staff support is readily available and spoke positively about the admissions and induction process. Support is based on the College Information and Guidance Policy with students having entitlements for support and information. The College regularly reviews its student support process. Students are assigned a tutor and group tutorials are timetabled with the students confirming the ease of access of the staff. Students complete an initial assessment with the learning support team to identify any support needs. Currently, this data is held in a separate profile. In 2010-11 it will be fully integrated in to personal learning plans on the College's virtual learning environment.

30 The College's virtual learning environment is used effectively to support students. The showcasing of students' work in performing arts is supported by the use of e-portfolios and a website. The virtual learning environment offers continuous anonymous feedback throughout the year and for audio and visual feedback on filmed evidence of students' work. This is good practice. Electronic submission of assessments has been piloted in performing arts and it is intended to extend this to the Animal Management and Welfare programme. An academic support and guidance web page has been developed in performing arts to support some of the following: common mistakes in referencing, guidance in writing an effective evaluation and how to read a difficult text.

31 Employers provide placements, projects and practical skills training, as well as making contributions as visiting lecturers. In a meeting with employers they endorsed the strong vocational focus of the programmes, as well as the various levels of employer engagement. Students and employers on the FdSc Animal Management and Welfare programme receive 'Guidance Notes' for their work-based learning module, which include a comprehensive summary of the practical and academic assessment process and a detailed assignment brief for the placement report and the industry research project. The notes provide clear information for staff and employers on how to provide feedback. The work-based and placement learning guidelines for students, staff and employers is good practice.

**What are the College's arrangements for staff development to maintain and enhance the quality of learning opportunities?**

32 The staff development process is outlined in paragraph 20. For the maintenance and enhancement of learning opportunities, recent activities for staff teaching on the FdSc Animal Management and Welfare programme have included setting examination papers, the use of virtual learning, employer engagement and the use of e-portfolios in learning. Staff have also attended a development away day which included teaching in higher education in colleges. Staff in both programme areas have extensive records of development activity related to learning opportunities. The staff development activity in the performing arts is directly relevant for higher education and is good practice. This includes studying for master's and PhDs and attending relevant conferences. Out of 15 staff delivering higher education five have master's degrees and two are studying for a PhD.

**How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?**

33 Learning resources are considered routinely at awarding body reviews and revalidations, annual reports and through annual module evaluations. The Higher Education Committee has a standing agenda item for learning resources. The Strategic Improvement Plan considers the accommodation strategy, teaching resources and estates. Learning resources are the responsibility of the College's Resources Management Group. All resources and spending are decided here including information technology, staff development and specialist resources for performing arts and animal management and welfare. It is intended to devolve budgets for 2010-11, with higher education having its own budget.

34 In the learning resource centre, the library has a devolved budget designated for higher education provision which enables programme teams to review resources and effectively update them for each module. The higher education provision is well resourced, with the College committed to enhancing a well-equipped theatre and the farm and animal facilities at the Melton and Brooksby Campuses respectively. External examiners have commented favourably on the high quality of learning resources. Students told the team that they are very satisfied with the resources available to them and this is confirmed in the module evaluation returns. Students are also satisfied with the arrangements to access learning resources of the awarding bodies. The performing arts team has excellent leadership and has been successful in raising funds to develop programmes, for example to refurbish the theatre. The enterprising activity and fund raising of the performing arts team to enhance the students' learning opportunities is good practice.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities, as required by the awarding bodies, to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

**Core theme 3: Public information**

**What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?**

35 The partnership agreements with the awarding bodies set out clear responsibilities for the publication of information. Some responsibilities are defined as referring to the College, the awarding bodies or shared between them. The College publishes a range of information for applicants in both paper and online formats.

36 Currently, the College website is undergoing a fundamental overhaul and it relies upon a paper prospectus that is colourful and attractive, and provides the most current information for students applying for higher education programmes. A new website incorporating higher education information is due to be launched in June 2010. In the meantime the College has a temporary website. There are residual web pages from the former website which are accessible and hold different information on the programmes found in the prospectus. This can be confusing for prospective students. It is recommended as desirable that the College makes clear that any information on residual websites is no longer valid. One subject area has created an interim website, with the approval of the awarding body, to promote its programmes, and its management currently lies with the Programme Team Manager. This website is attractively presented and easy to access. However, there could be some confusion in applicants' understanding over the status of the FdA Leadership, Management and Enterprise, and the University Certificate in Professional Development in Enterprise and Entrepreneurship for the Creative Industries. When the new website is operational this will be amended.

37 The College has a social networking site that is accessible only to higher education staff and students and provides information on developments and opportunities. The College's Marketing Coordinator manages this site. There is also a website aimed at former students from the performing arts programmes which promotes the professional development of students by providing useful information on work and conferences. This is a temporary measure and is managed by the programme team. This too will be incorporated into the new College website.

38 The College has plans to deliver three new Higher National Certificate/Diploma (HNC/D) programmes instead of new Foundation Degrees. The latter are included in the College prospectus for 2010-11 and all applicants were contacted by telephone and in writing to explain the change. The College considers the information in the prospectus to be accurate at the time it goes to print, some 10 months prior to the start of the academic year. In the prospectus there is reference only to full-time fees and it is not clear just from reading the prospectus how much part-time provision costs. The prospectus provides useful and accurate information including student services, accommodation and finance. The links with the De Montfort University and the University of Lincoln are clearly identified.

39 The College produces a range of documents and materials for current students. These are accurate and complete. Students are provided with hard copies of programme handbooks at the start. These are also available on the virtual learning environment. It was noted as good practice in the Development engagement that the performing arts handbook was of outstanding quality and includes detailed programme information, assessment, resources and examples of student work. Key information is drawn from the programme specifications and made available in the handbooks, especially in performing arts. It is recommended as desirable that the performing arts handbook be used as a template for all College higher education handbooks.

**What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing? How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?**

40 The College and its awarding bodies recognise the need to monitor the reliability of public information and have recently implemented clear procedures to ensure regular reviews of relevant documentation. The information available to students and other stakeholders is produced in accordance with partnership agreements between the College

and its validating universities. Published data about programmes and students is assured for accuracy in accordance with the requirements of university partners through annual monitoring processes and validations. The College's own monitoring processes help to ensure the accuracy of data as an ongoing process through the year. The Marketing Manager communicates with the marketing departments at the awarding bodies in the early stages of the production of the prospectus and ensures compliance with relevant policies and procedures.

41 The Developmental engagement recommended as desirable that the College should establish a central mechanism for the management of its public information. There is now a marketing focus group chaired by the Principal which reviews all marketing information. To allow a more detailed focus on higher education, there is a standard agenda item at the Higher Education Committee. Responsibility for checking the accuracy of the public information, including the prospectus lies with the Senior Management Team. Programme team managers sign off materials and send the copy to the recently created Marketing Department. The draft materials are then sent for approval to Senior Management Team. In addition any materials requiring approval from the awarding body are sent to the respective marketing department for approval.

42 The current temporary website is managed by the Marketing Department and it is planned that the new one will go live in June 2010. The contract for the new site is being overseen by the Senior Management Team which reports that it is ahead of schedule with every confidence the new site will meet the needs of the College.

43 The College, with its awarding bodies, has an efficient and well-managed system for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the public information. The College has moved swiftly to address any shortcomings of its management of public information.

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

## **C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment**

44 The Developmental engagement took place in April 2009. The lines of enquiry were as follows:

**Line of enquiry 1:** The review and development of the assessment process through internal verification, external verification and student feedback

**Line of enquiry 2:** The quality and range of formative, summative and peer feedback

**Line of enquiry 3:** The accessibility and clarity of information available on student assessment.

45 The Developmental engagement identified several good practices, including the particularly thorough internal verification system, the well-structured written feedback and the high quality of the programme handbook in performing arts, the College's virtual learning environment and the detailed 'Guidance Notes' for work-based learning and the industry research project in Animal Management and Welfare.

46 There was one essential recommendation, namely, to implement plans for a college-level management of the higher education provision. Two recommendations advised the College to produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education provision and to encourage all staff to become familiar with the Academic Infrastructure. It was also regarded as desirable that the College establishes a central mechanism for the management of public information.

## **D Foundation Degrees**

47 The College offers three Foundation Degrees in Animal Management and Welfare, Performing Arts in the Community, and Leadership, Management and Enterprise. They have 36, 11 and 11 full-time equivalents respectively. There were plans to develop further programmes in equine management, film and video production and dance for 2010-11. However, all validations have been temporarily suspended until a new funding proposal is accepted or restrictions on student numbers are lifted. The College has decided to develop these programmes as HNC/Ds.

48 The team's findings and conclusions relate to all the College's higher education provision including the Foundation Degrees that it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.

## **E Conclusions and summary of judgements**

49 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Brooksby Melton College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, De Montfort University and the University of Lincoln.

50 In the course of the review, the team identified the following areas of **good practice**:

- the Mapping Document is a robust mechanism for the effective monitoring of the use of the Academic Infrastructure in the higher education programmes (paragraph 18)
- the showcasing of students' work in performing arts is supported by the use of e-portfolios and a website. The virtual learning environment offers continuous anonymous feedback throughout the year and for audio and visual feedback on filmed evidence of students' work (paragraph 30)
- the work-based and placement learning guidelines for students, staff and employers is a clear guide for this form of learning (paragraph 31)
- the staff development activity in the performing arts is directly relevant for higher education (paragraph 32)
- the enterprising activity and fund raising of the performing arts team to enhance the students' learning opportunities (paragraph 34).

51 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

52 The team agreed the following area where the College is advised to take action:

- to produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education programmes to provide an overview of its provision and to facilitate the dissemination of good practice (paragraph 15).

53 The team also agreed the following areas where it would be desirable for the College to take action:

- the observation of teaching is modified to make more reference to learning and teaching in higher education (paragraph 25)
- explores the development and implementation of a mechanism to facilitate the gathering, evaluation and monitoring of sector wide employer intelligence and the sharing of good practice in employer engagement (paragraph 28)
- the College makes clear that any information on residual websites is no longer valid (paragraph 36)
- that the performing arts handbook is used as a template for all College higher education handbooks (paragraph 39).

54 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation and other documentary evidence, and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement, for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

55 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation and other documentary evidence, and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement, for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

56 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation and other documentary evidence, and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Brooksby Melton College action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Mapping Document is a robust mechanism for the effective monitoring of the use of the Academic Infrastructure in higher education programmes (paragraph 18)</li> </ul>	Reviewed and updated quarterly by HE committee	Sept 2010 and ongoing monthly through HE committee	Head of Learning	All staff are updated and procedures are clear for students at the start of academic year.	HE committee	HE student forum feedback HE annual self assessment report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the showcasing of students' work in performing arts is supported by the use of e-portfolios and a website and the virtual learning environment offers continuous anonymous feedback throughout the year and for audio and visual feedback on filmed</li> </ul>	Reviewed by Students via HE forum for evaluation purposes and to seek improvements and roll out across other HE courses	2 x year at HE forum	HE committee	Feedback and actions to be added to HE action plan for implementation.	HE committee	HE student forum feedback HE annual self assessment report

Brooksby Melton College action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
evidence of students' work (paragraph 30)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the work-based and placement learning guidelines for students, staff and employers provides clear guidance for this form of learning (paragraph 31)</li> </ul>	Work placement handbooks completed by Aug 2010 for all HE provision	August 2010	HE committee	Handbooks completed	HE committee	Employer and student feedback HE annual self assessment report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the staff development activity in the performing arts is directly relevant for higher education (paragraph 32)</li> </ul>	Revise BMC CPD policy to better reflect HE CPD across all HE staff	October 2010	HE committee	Policy approved by CMT	HE committee	HE annual self assessment report Staff Appraisals

Brooksby Melton College action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the enterprising activity and fund raising of the performing arts team to enhance the students' learning opportunities (paragraph 34).</li> </ul>	<p>All HE areas to provide a detailed plan of enrichment activity including competitions etc for each academic year.</p>	<p>August 2010</p>	<p>Programme Team manager</p>	<p>Activities agreed by CMT for delivery in 2010/11.</p>	<p>HE committee</p>	<p>HE annual self assessment report HE Student Forum feedback</p>

Brooksby Melton College action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed the following area where the College should be advised to take action:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education programmes to provide an overview of its provision and to facilitate the dissemination of good practice (paragraph 15).</li> </ul>	<p>PTM's to produce SAR in line with QA procedure.</p> <p>HoL to collate PTM SAR to produce annual report</p> <p>HE annual report approved by Q&amp;S committee</p> <p>College SAR (including HE SAR) published.</p>	<p>September 2010</p> <p>October 2010</p> <p>November 2010</p> <p>November 2010</p>	<p>Programme Team manager</p> <p>Head of Learning</p> <p>Head Of Learning</p> <p>Assistant Principal</p>	<p>Annual Self assessment report completed and signed off by Board</p>	<p>HE committee</p>	<p>Quality &amp; Standards accept annual report as robust and accurate.</p>

Brooksby Melton College action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed the following areas where it would be <b>desirable</b> to take action:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the observation of teaching is modified to make more reference to learning and teaching in higher education (paragraph 25)</li> </ul>	Training / Review with Awarding bodies on Lesson Obs process/ grading  Lesson Obs undertaken by External team  Review feedback from External team to confirm amendments implemented.	September 2010  November 2010  January 2010	HE committee	Revised Schemes of Work, Lesson Plans and Lesson Obs to reflect HE differences	HE committee	Lesson Obs scores improve and staff feedback at HE committee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to explore the development and implementation of a mechanism to facilitate the gathering, evaluation and</li> </ul>	HE committee to discuss best method for undertaking this action.	September 2010	HE Committee	Regular employer report on good practice	HE committee	Employer feedback HE annual self assessment report

Brooksby Melton College action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
monitoring of sector wide employer information and the sharing of good practice in employer engagement (paragraph 28)	Plan agreed  Qtrly feedback to HE committee	October 2010  January 2010				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to make clear that any information on residual websites is no longer valid (paragraph 36)</li> </ul>	New website will resolve this matter once the site goes 'LIVE' in Early July 2010	July 2010	Marketing	Live website	HE committee	No further complaints or residual website available
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to ensure that the performing arts handbook is used as a template for all College higher education handbooks (paragraph 39).</li> </ul>	Final draft signed off July 2010 in time for 2010/11 academic year start.	July 2010	HE committee	Hand book completed and approved	HE committee	HE forum feedback

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