# Integrated quality and enhancement review

**Summative review**

**Lincoln College**

**October 2010**

**SR006**

# 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 Lincoln College carried out in October 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 agreements, 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 content of the Higher Education Annual Monitoring Report is well expressed and evaluative, providing a clear focus for the provision
- support is provided for staff to read for higher degrees and there are wide-ranging opportunities for staff development, which include undertaking research projects with partner awarding bodies
- the internal examination boards ensure that all matters relating to each student's achievement and progression are thoroughly reviewed and evaluated by the College prior to their formal consideration at the awarding body's examination boards
- the expanding role of the Higher Education Forum enhances the quality of student learning through, for example, considering the level of tutorial support, work-based projects and assignments
- the peer review partnerships offer cross-moderation opportunities and stimulate the sharing of higher education teaching and learning practices
- the Intervention Policy outlines clear procedures for the identification, monitoring and improvement of underperforming courses
- the comprehensive and thorough cross-college Learning Resources Unit and Student Services annual evaluations contribute to the College self-assessment report and provide an effective basis for the planning and enhancement of students' learning.

## Recommendations

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

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

- review the content of its self-assessment and annual monitoring reports and the use of the interim course meetings to ensure that their focus is more consistent and effective
- review the range of student feedback opportunities and their efficacy, to provide a more coherent and rationalised approach across the courses for the collection and use of students' perceptions

- explore with the awarding bodies the opportunities for encouraging students to make better use of awarding bodies' virtual learning environments
- reconsider the content of the induction processes across its courses to ensure that they are tailored more specifically to students' needs
- review the programme specifications for the Edexcel courses to engage with QAA's guidelines for preparing programme specifications.

# 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 Lincoln 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 Edexcel, the University of Lincoln, Nottingham Trent University, Sheffield Hallam University, the National Vocational Council and Southampton Solent University. The review was carried out by Mr Christopher Davies, Professor Gillian Grant, Mr Peter Hymans (reviewers) and Mr Robert Hodgkinson (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, 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        Lincoln College is a general further education college situated in the city of Lincoln with two satellite campuses in Gainsborough and Newark. It serves a large geographical area and is the largest post-16 further education establishment in Lincolnshire. It offers a wide range of programmes designed for 14-19 year-old learners, general further education, adults and higher education students. Its higher education courses provide a coherent internal progression path from level 3 as well as recruiting from local industry, employers and UCAS. In 2009-10 the College's further education provision numbered 23,450 students. For the academic year 2010-11, there are currently 356 HEFCE-funded higher education students, of which 86 are full-time and 270 part-time. Forty-two staff teach the higher education provision, of whom 37 are full-time, and five occupy fractional posts. The College's mission is to 'raise aspirations, realise potential and deliver success'.

5        The College delivers its programmes within three schools of study: Business; Construction Engineering; and Sport, Media and the Arts. It offers the following programmes (full-time equivalent student numbers in brackets):

**Edexcel**

- HNC/D Business (21)
- HNC/D Civil Engineering (27.5)
- HNC Construction (18)
- HNC/D Electrical and Electronic Engineering (29.25)
- HNC/D Mechanical Engineering (21.75)

**University of Lincoln**

- FD Computer Science (0 - this programme is offered but does not have any enrolled students)
- FD Sport Performance and Exercise Development (41)
- HNC/D Computer Science (39.5)

**Nottingham Trent University**

- Certificate in Education/Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (14)
- FD Construction Management (1.5)

**National Vocational Council and Southampton Solent University**

- FD Electrical and Electronic Engineering (4)

**Sheffield Hallam University**

- FD Health and Active Lifestyles (14).

## Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies

6        The College has formal partnership agreements with the University of Lincoln, Nottingham Trent University, Sheffield Hallam University and currently the National Vocational Council in conjunction with Southampton Solent University. Similarly, Lincoln College has a long and successful working relationship with Edexcel. The teacher training courses are franchised by Nottingham Trent University to the College. The FD Electrical and Electronic Engineering was formerly an award made through the National Vocational Council and offered jointly by National Vocational Council member institutions. Member institutions, and subsequently the National Vocational Academic Council, had approved the College as a centre to offer the Foundation Degree for a period of five years from 2007-08. The National Vocational Council has ceased its administrative operations and Southampton Solent University has taken the responsibility for the oversight and management of the Foundation Degree. The University is seeking a new partner for Lincoln College. No local awarding body is prepared to take responsibility for the programme. Consequently, the College has reverted to offering an Edexcel HNC/D in this subject area. Southampton Solent University has agreed to continue in its current role until all students have graduated from the programme.

7        The awarding bodies are responsible for programme approval and alignment with the Academic Infrastructure; validation; acceptance of applications; ensuring common standards; moderation; final assessment and award; regular meetings to monitor quality; and the process of annual evaluation and continual improvement of academic outcomes. The College is responsible for programme delivery; assessment and internal moderation; quality of teaching and learning; application of the awarding bodies' standards; regular internal monitoring of quality; and compliance with their requirements for annual evaluation and review.

## Recent developments in higher education at the College

8        September 2009 saw the successful revalidation of the FD Sport Performance and Exercise Development, the FD Computer Science and the HNC/D in Computer Science courses by the University of Lincoln. In the same year the engineering provision was enhanced by the introduction of specialist HND top-up courses to meet local employer

needs. Due to a reduction in HEFCE funding, the re-introduced Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education programmes were withdrawn for the academic year 2010-11. In September 2009 the College appointed an Assistant Principal (Adults) in response to changes in the Learning and Skills Council's funding. The postholder was to provide a clearer representation of higher education to senior management in the College. This post has now been rescinded, and its responsibilities devolved to the former postholder, the Director of the Business School.

## 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 Summative review team. The students provided a written self-evaluation document, which was summarised and evaluated by the College. A cross-section of higher education students undertook the production of the student written submission based on two initiatives. College managers interviewed groups of students from the higher education programmes to discuss their perceptions of their courses of study. The College provided a summary of these responses. In addition, student course representatives reviewed the College's National Student Survey statistics for 2008-09 and the outcomes of its student First Impressions Survey for 2009. They were asked to highlight positive elements of the courses and areas for development. Based on these outcomes, students completed a questionnaire which was evaluated by the College and submitted as the student written submission. During the review, the students met the team and expanded some of the points that they made in the submission. Their evidence was of value to the review.

# 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 manages the standards of its higher education provision in compliance with awarding bodies' requirements. The respective responsibilities of the College and each awarding body are specified clearly in comprehensive course agreements for each of the courses. Each awarding body prescribes the policies, assessments, regulations and responsibilities by which the College is expected to abide. Staff at each institution are aware of their responsibilities and awarding body link tutors and the College's course leaders liaise to reinforce them. They are responsible to their respective institutions and play a key role in the maintenance of the standards, quality assurance and the delivery of the programmes. These links work well. The College is expected to adhere to each awarding body's procedures for quality assurance and enhancement. These are identified in the latter's academic regulations and procedures and are effectively discharged.

11        Monitored by the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality), responsibility for the delivery of curriculum quality resides within the respective College school delivering the programme area or course. Each school curriculum manager for higher education is expected to ensure that a consistent quality of provision is delivered. The curriculum manager also aids course development and validation, reporting directly to the Assistant Principal. The curriculum manager also acts as the College link with the awarding bodies. Directors of school delegate the responsibility for delivering standards to each teaching team

through a programme manager, who determines each course coordinator's duties. Module leaders are responsible for the planning, delivery and assessments that prescribe module outcomes and marking and moderation within their specialist areas. Programme managers regularly review course-related information, including analyses and actions, reporting their findings to the respective Director of School. Within the College, these processes are well understood and confirmed as systematic, clear and effective.

12      The College's Quality Improvement Strategy for its further and higher education provision comprises a wide range of policies and procedures that signify its commitment to quality improvement. It underpins the College's curriculum and human resources strategies and confirms that all staff are expected to assume responsibility for quality and standards, irrespective of their position. Its Higher Education Strategy identifies the internal and external quality indicators used by the College to assess its effectiveness in discharging its responsibilities. Internal indicators rely heavily on student feedback, course team meetings, the outcomes of lesson observations and course-specific unit reviews. The strategy also highlights the importance of its partnerships with employers and other colleges. It includes an ambitious course development plan.

13      The College manages the standards of its higher and further education provision through a number of committees and management structures. There are clear responsibilities and reporting arrangements within the College. The College's Quality Improvement Strategy establishes its governors' role in monitoring the overall quality of the provision. Detailed scrutiny is delegated to various sub-committees. The Standards Committee approves and monitors the composite self-assessment report and the resultant Quality Improvement Plan. Its role is central in monitoring and reviewing all aspects of the College's quality that impact on its provision. Led by the College Principal, the Senior Management Team is responsible for the strategic management of quality, standards and improvement strategies. Supported by the vice-principals, the Deputy Principal has delegated responsibility for the curriculum and quality and is involved in all related committees. These include the Standards and the Quality Standards Committee. As part of this process, the Head of Quality and Professional Development is pivotal in developing, reviewing and discharging the elements of the Quality Improvement Strategy. The role includes responsibility for peer review, self-assessment, lesson observation and professional development linked to teaching and learning. The postholder works with curriculum leaders to support and enhance the quality of processes and procedures that impact on programme and course delivery. It is the responsibility of the Director of Business Studies to ensure that matters relating to higher education are well represented at senior management level. The framework is well understood within the College and it is clear that the management structures support the effective development of the provision.

## What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

14      All courses are aligned with the provisions of the Academic Infrastructure in terms of the academic standards embedded in the intended learning outcomes. This is irrespective of whether the courses are written by College staff and validated by the awarding bodies, or by the awarding bodies. The validation documents and awarding body programme specifications contain clear and appropriate referencing to the FHEQ and relevant subject and qualification benchmark statements. The courses written in conjunction with the awarding bodies demonstrate the clear mapping of learning outcomes between the level 5 courses delivered at the College and the level 6 provision delivered by the awarding bodies.

15      The Higher Education Strategy includes the expectation that the College maps each course to the Academic Infrastructure by 2011. This mapping is expected to encompass all of the College's processes including its central services. To date the College has mapped Sections 3, 5 and 8 of the *Code of practice.* These detailed analyses provide clear guidance

to staff on the manner in which the College is responsive to and addresses the precepts of the *Code of practice*.

16      Although not well evidenced in the minutes of meetings, the staff confirm that aspects of the Academic Infrastructure are recurring items on the agendas of committee meetings at all levels in the College. They were able to articulate clearly their individual and collective engagement with its provisions. The awarding bodies provide annual monitoring templates that include specific links to relevant sections of the *Code of practice* and to the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*, ensuring that the College has a recurrent engagement with the Academic Infrastructure.

17      College staff are well informed and have an appropriate knowledge of the Academic Infrastructure, which has been gained from initiatives and events promoted by the Higher Education Forum and from a variety of internal and external sources. The awarding bodies' continuing professional development events provide staff with information and training relating to the Academic Infrastructure. College staff are also active members of the awarding body award and progression boards and moderation groups.

18      The awarding bodies' assessment regulations are closely aligned with the Academic Infrastructure. Course handbooks for these courses contain module specifications that are comprehensive and informative. Intended learning outcomes have been matched to subject benchmark statements. Overall, the College has engaged appropriately with the Academic Infrastructure and it is amply taken into account in managing standards. The team confirms that engagement with the Academic Infrastructure is firmly embedded in the College's systems and procedures.

**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      All course teams complete an annual evaluation in the form of either a self-assessment report or an annual monitoring report pro forma provided by the awarding body. The reports are expected to incorporate and evaluate course-related information, statistics, reports from module leaders, the results of student feedback and external examiner's comments. They form the basis of a quality improvement plan to guide the following year's activity. The format of the reports varies to meet the requirements of each of the awarding bodies. In the best cases, the content of the reports is comprehensive and evaluative. In other cases, for example the combined BTEC National and Higher National Certificate in Engineering, the responses are limited in content and insufficiently reflective or evaluative. External examiner comments are reported, discussed and action on them planned in course team meetings. Most courses have interim course meetings, the purpose of which is to provide a focus for monitoring each course. As evidenced in course team minutes, there is some variability in the practices and degree of rigour in the minuted responses recorded by course teams. The team recommends that the College reviews the content of its self-assessment and annual monitoring reports and the use of the interim course meetings to ensure that their focus is more consistent and effective**.** A copy of each report is forwarded to the awarding bodies for scrutiny and approval and informs their processes. The reports feed in turn into programme area self-assessment reports and relevant elements are integrated into the College's self-assessment report. A separate higher education annual monitoring report is derived from all the higher education course reports and forwarded to the Quality Standards Committee for approval, and then to the Standards Committee. Following feedback from these committees, an action plan is appended to the report. The team finds that the content of the Higher Education Annual Monitoring Report is well expressed and evaluative, providing a clear focus for the provision.

20       In accordance with the course agreements, the awarding body link tutors are expected to play a central role in liaising with the College managers and course leaders to ensure that the College adheres to awarding bodies' partnership agreements, quality assurance and enhancement procedures. With their College counterparts, they contribute to the maintenance of the standards and the delivery of the courses. Link tutors are expected to produce an annual report to the awarding body on the functioning of the College's provision.

21       The College fulfils its obligations for ensuring standards by the attention that is paid to the content of external examiners' reports. External examiners are appointed by the awarding bodies to monitor the standards of the College's higher education provision. Course external examiners verify assessments prior to commenting on quality assurance issues. Their reports feed into the annual monitoring reports. They are forwarded to the College's Quality Improvement Unit and then circulated to relevant College managers. Where reports are received direct by the awarding body they are reviewed by them and, where action is required, are forwarded to the relevant College course team for a response. Course teams produce action plans for matters requiring attention that are progressed through the self-assessment or annual monitoring reports. The team concludes that the processes are transparent and robust, ensuring that the standards of higher education at the College meet the awarding bodies' rules and regulations. The procedures help the College to ensure that it is fulfilling its obligations with respect to the standards laid down by its awarding partners.

## What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standards?

22       The College's Staff Development Policy and Procedures provide a comprehensive framework that supports each school's staff development needs, listing a range of priorities for the allocation of its resources. The measures identified in the policy encourage staff to take individual responsibility for their personal development. The College supports staff engaged in the management and delivery of its higher education programmes by offering a range of staff development opportunities that encourage subject development, updating and enhancement of the currency of the provision. This includes attendance at continuing professional development events provided by partner awarding bodies, with university colleagues and partner college staff engaged in shared delivery of the programmes (on the Certificate in Education/Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and FD Construction Management). Financial support and time allowances encourage selected staff to take the opportunity to read for higher degrees and to enhance their qualifications. Consequently, these benefit the programmes and demonstrate good practice.

23       The College provides opportunities and encouragement for higher education staff development through its Higher Education Forum. Past initiatives include a focus on plagiarism and the use of the virtual learning environment. External speakers are invited to the College to update staff on, for example, the use of specialist software to help detect plagiarism.

**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?**

24      The arrangements described in paragraphs 10-13 provide a framework that ensures the effective management and delegation of the responsibilities underpinning the quality of learning opportunities.

25      The College has introduced internal examination boards for all its higher education programmes. These take place after the process of marking and moderation is completed. The internal examination boards are chaired by the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) and are a precursor to the awarding bodies' own formal examination boards. Their purpose is to ensure that all matters relating to each student's achievement and progression are thoroughly reviewed and evaluated by the College prior to their formal consideration at the awarding bodies' examination boards. They are guided by a standard agenda. In addition to agreeing student outcomes, external examiner comments are discussed and future staff development needs are identified. The boards also promote standardisation of practices across the programme areas. They ensure that the staff are well informed of all matters relating to each student's performance and aid sound decision-making. This process engages with Edexcel's *Specialist Paper 1*, and demonstrates good practice within all programme areas.

26      The course teams are expected to comply with the regulations, policies and procedures prescribed by the respective awarding body. These are alluded to in each of the courses' higher education handbooks, which are written by the course teams and approved by the awarding body. These prescribe the range of learning opportunities that underpin the framework for the delivery of the courses, within which all tutors operate. The range of strategies that underpin the delivery of teaching and learning is well articulated.

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

27      The arrangements described in paragraphs 19-21 provide an effective framework that ensures the management and delegation of the responsibilities underpinning the quality of learning opportunities. Attendance at awarding body committee meetings, networks and peer colleges enrich the courses. The relationship of the course leaders with link tutors supports the College staff in the implementation of awarding body policies and procedures governing the delivery of the provision.

28      An outcome of the Colleges' Developmental engagement action plan was a recommendation to expand the activities and influence of its Higher Education Forum. This was established to encourage cross-college higher education dialogue on the sharing of good practice between subject areas and schools. Its function is to stimulate feedback on common higher education experiences, to formulate initiatives and make decisions that enhance the provision, including the sharing of good practice. It includes representation from the Learning Resources Unit and Student Services. The agendas and minutes of meetings are wide ranging, including, for example, consideration of the level of tutorial support, work-based projects and assignments. The Higher Education Forum is now playing a full role in the enhancement of the quality of student learning and represents good practice.

29      The College has agreements with each of its awarding bodies that detail the responsibilities for the provision of resources for the courses. The College is obliged to provide all the resources necessary to deliver them. Students may access the respective awarding body's library facilities but without having borrowing rights. For students on franchised programmes, the College must also provide resources but, in this case, students have the right to access the respective awarding body's services and resources. Students on validated programmes may also have access to the virtual learning environment of the awarding body, but in practice this is little used by students. College resources are the subject of scrutiny at initial approval by the awarding body and at revalidations. The annual monitoring reports also confirm whether the original resources are sufficient to meet the needs of the learners. Students confirm that the resources are generally good, and they welcomed particularly the availability and access to electronic journals. Some students indicate that their College accommodation is of variable quality and that they had experienced some difficulty in accessing specialist information technology equipment. The team considers that the resources provided by the College and available through its awarding body partners are adequate to enable the students to achieve their intended learning outcomes and to fulfil its obligations.

## What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

30      The arrangements described in paragraphs 14-18 provide an effective framework for engagement with the Academic Infrastructure in the context of the quality of the learning opportunities. Staff are aware of the Academic Infrastructure through its consideration at the Higher Education Forum, the awarding bodies' documentation and continuing professional development opportunities, and the College's own staff development activities.

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

31      The College has a Teaching and Learning Strategy that is common to its higher and further education provision and complements the teaching and learning strategies of its awarding bodies. It is succinct and provides a framework for the improvement of teaching and learning. It focuses on three areas for improvement that are common to all levels of delivery. By addressing these common themes the College expects to encourage the sharing of good practice and provide a focus for its external staff development, research and staffing. An implementation plan is an additional component of the strategy. This provides a structured and adequately resourced route for its implementation. The higher education management and teaching staff are responsible for its implementation. The team is impressed by the College's commitment to the strategy.

32      The respective awarding bodies approve all staff managing and delivering their courses at the College for their academic suitability. Approval is undertaken either at the validation of an award or at the point when College staff or new entrants subsequently join higher education teaching teams. This approval also extends to part-time and agency staff. The College's Higher Education Self-Assessment Report draws on both external examiners' reports and National Student Survey data to confirm that academic standards are appropriate and comparable to other institutions offering the same award. In the most recent survey the College's standards of teaching and learning are considered as high.

33      In accordance with its Higher Education Strategy, the College participates in two peer review partnerships that encompass its provision. The relationships provide opportunities for benchmarking, the consideration of retention and achievement rates and for the sharing of learning and teaching strategies. An outcome of the meetings has led to the successful development of a partnership programme for an FD Construction Management

award, to be offered across the East Midlands. The peer review partnerships offer cross-moderation opportunities for the higher education programme reports and stimulate the sharing of higher education teaching and learning practices. The opportunities for feedback serve to enhance the provision and represent good practice.

34      In its Higher Education Strategy, the College is committed to achieving a 90 per cent success rate for its students. It has established an Intervention Policy and Procedures that aid the achievement of this target. This outlines clear procedures for the identification, monitoring and improvement of underperforming courses and is expected to play an important part in ensuring a high level of provision across the College. The intervention process involves the Principal, Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality), directors of schools, the Head of Quality Improvement and the Head of Teaching and Learning in monitoring the improvement of underperforming provision. The process is managed, monitored and evaluated by the Head of Quality Improvement. An examination of intervention reports indicates they are supportive of staff and consider teaching and learning, tutorials and resources. They demonstrate good practice.

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

35      The cross-college Learning Resources Unit and Student Services complete annual evaluations, which contribute to the College self-assessment report that is presented to the Board of Governors. The content of these evaluations is comprehensive and thorough. They provide an effective basis for the planning and enhancement of the services to students. Their incorporation in College reports at senior management level ensures that due consideration is given to student needs and the resources necessary to underpin their expectations. They represent good practice.

36      Students greatly value their relationship with College staff and the support they receive from their tutors. This is particularly apparent for those students returning to study. All students receive an induction during which they are informed of the services available to them. They indicate that they are kept well informed of the range of support services available at the College. Support for disability, hardship, welfare and careers advice is well developed within the College. For some students on the indirectly funded programmes these services are also available at awarding body institutions. However, student awareness of these entitlements is limited. All students have an entitlement to a named personal tutor and can expect to receive at least two personal tutorials each term. If required, they can access College staff at any time. The small size of tutor groups also helps to provide support to students. Personal development planning forms an integral part of all higher education courses. The College has introduced personal development planning software, which is linked to its tutorial system. Students are invited to attend committee meetings and all courses have student representatives. They report that the College is responsive to their opinions and cite examples of improvements that have resulted from their feedback.

37      There is variability in the manner in which student feedback is collected and in the quality of its content. In some cases module and unit-level feedback is collected at the end of the year; in others, this is supplemented by mid-year opportunities. Some courses collect course-level feedback that is detailed and comprehensive whereas, in others, the feedback is more superficial. Combinations of web-based, postal and paper-based questionnaires are used. Most courses operate interim course meetings that allow student representatives the opportunity to provide feedback on their courses. Feedback that is specific to higher education is elicited from an autumn term survey. Students also participate in a college-wide student survey and contribute to the National Student Survey. Senior managers chair student meetings at school and at college levels. These meetings focus mainly on gaining feedback from further education students. The Learning Resources Centre also runs meetings and a card-based system to secure student feedback. Generally, the students'

perceptions indicate high levels of satisfaction with their courses and they contribute significantly to enhancing quality. However, the efficiency and effectiveness of the methods of gaining feedback could be enhanced further by reviewing and confirming the purpose of each feedback opportunity, how it is to be used to enhance the provision, and identifying the most reliable and valid methods for its collection. Students value the way in which their opinions are sought but question the number of surveys in which they are requested to participate. The team recommends that the College build on the good practice evidenced in some of its feedback initiatives to review the range of student feedback opportunities and their efficacy, to provide a more coherent and rationalised approach across the courses.

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

38      The arrangements described in paragraphs 22 and 23 underpin the College's commitment to staff development and its impact on the quality of learning. Analysis of staff curriculum vitae and the College's continuing professional development records confirm that staff have the requisite skills to deliver the higher education courses. Through a robust system of staff appraisal, the development needs of all staff are identified, including those requirements related specifically to the delivery of higher education courses and the opportunity to study for higher degrees. College staff have undertaken research projects with partner awarding bodies in education studies. A range of activities has been confirmed as supporting staff development opportunities that maintain and/or enhance the quality of learning opportunities. These include attendance at higher education academy training days; industrial updating; and attendance at professional body meetings and conferences. Staff have also had the opportunity over an extended period of time to 'shadow' university lecturers and sit in on their lectures. The team concludes that the wide-ranging opportunities for staff development represent good practice.

39      A mentor supports the personal and professional development of each new permanent member of staff to ensure their smooth transition into teaching. Staff are responsible for delivering higher education courses and are obliged to undertake a teacher training qualification within two years of the commencement of their employment. On completion, staff are obliged to undertake a minimum of 30 hours of continuing professional development. The College's peer observation system allows colleagues to share good teaching and learning practices within their school.

## 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?

40      Capital expenditure planning starts at the level of the programme area. The latter's requests are prioritised by each school. The resultant plan for each school is forwarded to the senior management team, which takes the final decisions, informed by published criteria. The Curriculum Manager for Higher Education manages the HEFCE capital grant. The outcomes of this process have led to the purchase of specialist equipment to support the higher education curriculum.

41      While the use made of the virtual learning environment by course teams is variable, it is being developed at an appropriate pace in accordance with the Colleges' electronic learning strategy. This variability in use is recognised by the College, which has recently identified the minimum that all course teams must upload to the virtual learning environment to support teaching and learning. Although students use the College virtual learning environment for a variety of purposes, little use is made of awarding bodies' facilities.

The College is recommended to explore with the awarding bodies the opportunities for encouraging students to make better use of awarding bodies' virtual learning environments.

42      Effective planning supports the development of the library. This is based on close liaison with programme managers and securing feedback from student users. In the National Student Survey for 2009-10, the library resources scored 13 per cent above the sector average.

**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?

43      Under the terms of its agreements with its awarding bodies, the College is responsible for producing and publishing all information and marketing materials for its courses, although limited information and links are available on awarding body websites. For validated courses, the College must seek approval for all marketing material from the relevant awarding body before publishing information related to those courses. The College produces a course information sheet for each course based on the programme specification and information from these is accessible on the College website. Although this information is clear, one student experienced difficulty in identifying within the website where this course was listed, as it was not obvious. The link to the higher education section of the website is accessed through the adult learners' page but is not evident on the school leavers' page. The College also produces a higher education leaflet, which is also available on the website. This provides basic information on its higher education provision. To ensure a consistent experience for students in using the virtual learning environment, course coordinators are expected to supply information that complies with a standard list of requirements underpinning the courses of study. There is also the expectation that course teams will upload teaching and learning resources as they are developed, week-by-week, throughout the year and use the virtual learning environment's news forum for course-related announcements to students.

44       A recommendation included in the Developmental engagement action plan requires the College to provide guidance on the minimum specification for its student handbooks. The College has now produced a higher education template for its handbooks that is clear, attractive and informative. To promote consistency, it lists the content expected of the handbooks. All higher education programmes have now adopted this template. In particular, the information contained within the handbooks on referencing is clear and helpful to students.

45      At induction the students are provided with both College and awarding body handbooks that are standardised and conform to College or awarding body templates. The students confirm the accuracy of the information contained in the handbooks. However, there is variability in students' access to information on progression. The latter is not always addressed at induction or during the course. The students are satisfied with pre-course and in-course information they receive. Students' experience of the induction process is variable, with some full-time students receiving a much more comprehensive induction than their part-time counterparts. For those students progressing internally within the College from level 3 to level 4 courses, the induction process can be extremely brief. New entrants

indicate that it is not always sufficient to address their needs fully. In the better cases, an induction pack is sent to students prior to enrolment and a full week of induction is provided. During induction some students are not made fully aware of the range of resources offered by the awarding bodies. The College needs to reconsider the content of the induction processes across its courses to ensure that they are tailored more specifically to students' needs.

46       Programme specifications for the awarding body-validated programmes are current, well expressed and accurate. The awarding bodies verify them, with close attention being given to the Academic Infrastructure. However, programme specifications for the Edexcel courses are insufficient to provide prospective students and employers with a clear understanding of the courses and their content. Edexcel provides clear guidance on the development of the programme specifications. The College should review the programme specifications for its Edexcel courses to engage with QAA's guidelines for preparing programme specifications.

**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?**

47       The College defines and regularly updates the procedures for the review and checking of paper-based and web-based documentation for accuracy prior to their publication. Course information that is extracted from the validation documents and prepared using a standard template for the Higher Education Handbook is checked for accuracy by awarding body link tutors. Awarding body representatives confirm that liaison between College staff and staff of partner awarding bodies ensures that public information is accurate. Staff from the awarding bodies and the College sample published material to rectify errors and to make any necessary changes.

48       The course coordinators are directly responsible for ensuring the accuracy of marketing information for the higher education provision. This is the subject of further checking by the programme managers, directors of school and the Curriculum Manager for Higher Education, prior to its publication. The quality and control of public information in the provision is effective. Information that is placed in the public domain is subject to scrutiny by awarding body link tutors and College managers to ensure its reliability, accuracy and currency. During the preparation of the information, the curriculum teams and course coordinators work closely with the College's Marketing Department. All paper-based and web-based material that is published, including that uploaded onto the higher education section of the virtual learning environment, is the subject of approval by the Curriculum Manager for Higher Education or the Virtual Learning Environment Manager. The team concurs with the students that in the main, the information provided by the College for its students is helpful, accurate, consistent and up to date. The team confirms the effectiveness of these procedures as articulated in the College's statement on managing and organising public information.

**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.**

# C    Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment

49      The Developmental engagement in assessment for Lincoln College was undertaken in October 2008. There were three lines of enquiry as follows.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How is the College assured that its assessment strategies and programme design reflect the appropriate staff development and continuing professional development evidenced in their engagement with academic standards?

**Line of enquiry 2:** How is the College assured that the feedback provided to students on formative and summative assessment facilitates their learning and progression?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How effective are the procedures for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information, with particular emphasis on assessment support?

50      The lines of enquiry covered the implementation of the awarding body regulations on assessment across the courses and the responsibilities of the College in these processes. The scope of the Developmental engagement in assessment covered all of the higher education courses offered by the College.

51      The Developmental engagement identified a number of areas of good practice. These included the process of pre-checking the standards of assignments and the cross-moderation undertaken with awarding body partners and within collaborative partnerships. In addition, the team identified the opportunities provided by engaging with the Engineering Fellowship Scheme that enhanced the vocational relevance and currency of the construction and engineering programmes. The feedback practices that provided guidance for students about how they could improve subsequent assignments were also highlighted.

52      The report identified as advisable the recommendation to address the variability in the content of programme handbooks, including assessment guidelines. It confirms as desirable the need to demonstrate more effective engagement between its higher education strategy and the Academic Infrastructure, in particular the precepts of the *Code of practice*. The Higher Education Forum was highlighted as warranting expansion to promote more standardised education practices. The College's links with employers are recommended as needing development to enhance the currency of the curriculum and assessments. It concludes by identifying the desirability of developing more effective procedures for feedback within specific programme areas.

# D    Foundation Degrees

53      As of October 2010, there are four Foundation Degrees, as follows, with the awarding bodies in brackets:

- FD Construction Management (Nottingham Trent University)
- FD Electrical and Electronic Engineering
  (Southampton Solent University and the National Vocational Council)
- FD Health and Active Lifestyles (Sheffield Hallam University)
- FD Sport Performance and Exercise Development (University of Lincoln)

54      Southampton Solent University is seeking a new partner for Lincoln College to transfer responsibility for the FD Electrical and Electronic Engineering. The University has been acting for the National Vocational Council as validator of the award. No local awarding

body is prepared to take responsibility for the programme. Consequently, the College has reverted to offering an Edexcel HNC/D in this subject area. Southampton Solent University has agreed to continue in its current role until all students have graduated from the programme.

55      The FD Sport Performance and Exercise Development and FD Computer Science were revalidated in September 2009. The awarding bodies' continuing professional development events provide staff with information and training relating to the Academic Infrastructure. For example, this is demonstrated in assessment regulation circulars that reflect the links between the FD Health and Active Lifestyles staff and Sheffield Hallam University. This includes support to read for higher degrees, attendance at continuing professional development events provided by partner awarding bodies with university colleagues and, in the case of the FD Construction Management, partner college staff engaged in shared delivery of the programme.

56      The outcome of the review confirms that appropriate and well-defined structures are in place to deliver academic standards that are appropriate to the provision of Foundation Degrees. These serve the needs of further and higher education without conflict. Student learning experiences, including work-based learning, are appropriate and align with the expectations of the awarding bodies. The latter have been very supportive of the College and the link tutor role is significant in confirming this. The College has high expectations of the impact of embedding the principles identified in its Teaching and Learning Strategy to effect improvements. The partnerships developed with other institutions and parallel programmes at other colleges serve to spread good practice, enhance the provision and act as a basis for benchmarking. The College has made progress in improving the consistency of its course documentation and practices. Equally it has substantially met the recommendations contained in the Developmental engagement action plan. With the exception of the need to review the programme specifications for the Edexcel courses, all good practice and recommendations listed in Section E are relevant to the Foundation Degrees.

# E      Conclusions and summary of judgements

57      The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Lincoln 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, Edexcel, the University of Lincoln, Nottingham Trent University, the National Vocational Council, Southampton Solent University and Sheffield Hallam University.

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

- the content of the Higher Education Annual Monitoring Report is well expressed and evaluative, providing a clear focus for the provision (paragraph 19)
- support is provided for staff to read for higher degrees and there are wide-ranging opportunities for staff development, which include undertaking research projects with partner awarding bodies (paragraphs 22 and 38)
- the internal examination boards ensure that all matters relating to each student's achievement and progression are thoroughly reviewed and evaluated by the College prior to their formal consideration at the awarding body's examination boards (paragraph 25)

- the expanding role of the Higher Education Forum enhances the quality of student learning through, for example, considering the level of tutorial support, work-based projects and assignments (paragraph 28)
- peer review partnerships offer cross-moderation opportunities and stimulate the sharing of higher education teaching and learning practices (paragraph 33)
- the Intervention Policy outlines clear procedures for the identification, monitoring and improvement of underperforming courses (paragraph 34)
- the comprehensive and thorough cross-college Learning Resources Unit and Student Services annual evaluations contribute to the College self-assessment report and provide an effective basis for the planning and enhancement of students' learning (paragraph 35).

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

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

- review the content of its self-assessment and annual monitoring reports and the use of the interim course meetings to ensure that their focus is more consistent and effective (paragraph 19)
- review the range of student feedback opportunities and their efficacy, to provide a more coherent and rationalised approach across the courses for the collection and use of students' perceptions (paragraph 37)
- explore with the awarding bodies the opportunities for encouraging students to make better use of awarding bodies' virtual learning environments (paragraph 41)
- reconsider the content of the induction processes across its courses to ensure that they are tailored more specifically to students' needs (paragraph 45)
- review the programme specifications for the Edexcel courses to engage with QAA's guidelines for preparing programme specifications (paragraph 46).

61      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 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.

62      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 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.

63      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 that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

| Lincoln College action plan relating to the Summative review: October 2010 | | | | | | |
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| **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 **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College: | | | | | | |
| • the content of the Higher Education Annual Monitoring Report is well expressed and evaluative, providing a clear focus for the provision (paragraph 19) | HE-AMR to be produced and delivered to QSC, GBSC and CST on an annual basis, with feedback received and updates made | Produced in September of any given academic year and delivered at October committee meetings | CM-HE | Production of report and delivery at various committees | DoS Business, VP (CQ), Principalship | HE-AMR action plan completion. Meeting minutes |
| | Disseminated via HE Forum | October HE Forum | CM-HE | Report and action plan discussed at HE Forum with HE delivery teams | DoS Business, VP (CQ), QSC | HE Forum minutes, HE-SAR/course reports and QiPs |
| • support is provided for staff to read for higher degrees and there are wide-ranging opportunities for staff development, which include undertaking research projects with partner awarding bodies (paragraphs 22, 38) | Support HE staff to undertake personal development and research opportunities. | Ongoing (reviewed monthly at HE Forum and personally via IPRs) | PMs, CM-HE | All lecturers achieving a minimum of 30 hours of CPD. Current levels of CPD maintained and improved | CM-HE, PMs, DoS, QSC | HE-SAR/course reports, HE-AMR, staff development records |
| | Maximise the internal CPD and research opportunities via the Teaching and Learning Unit and HE Forum | Monthly at HE Forum | CM-HE (and other trainers if required) | All course teams to be represented at each HE Forum | QSC | HE Forum minutes, staff development records |

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| • the internal examination boards ensure that all matters relating to each student's achievement and progression are thoroughly reviewed and evaluated by the College prior to their formal consideration at the awarding body's examination boards (paragraph 25) | Undertake internal examination boards and update the standards agenda to include student feedback (see later recommendation)<br><br>Present examination board findings to awarding bodies' examination boards | June 2011<br><br><br><br><br><br><br>June/July 2011 | VP (CQ), CM-HE<br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Course teams | All courses undertake an examination board<br><br><br><br><br><br>All course teams present recommendations to awarding bodies | VP (CQ), CM-HE, awarding bodies<br><br><br><br><br><br>VP (CQ), CM-HE, awarding bodies | Examination board minutes, HE-AMR, HE-SARs/course reports, EE comments<br><br><br><br>Awarding body board minutes, EE reports |
| • the expanding role of the Higher Education Forum enhances the quality of student learning through, for example, considering the level of tutorial support, work-based projects and assignments (paragraph 28) | Undertake monthly HE Forum meetings to cascade relevant information and to share good practice | Monthly with immediate effect | CM-HE | Each course team represented at monthly meetings, course data targets achieved, improved HE First Impression Survey results, improved NSS data | DoS Business, VP (CQ) | HE Forum minutes, EE comments, HE data, First Impression Survey results, NSS data |
| • peer review partnerships offer cross-moderation opportunities and stimulate the sharing of higher education teaching and learning practices (paragraph 33) | Undertake partner work with peer institutions to share good practice and assure academic standards via moderation activity | End of semester A/B and ongoing throughout the year (first event 10/12/10 with Chesterfield College) | Course teams, PMs | Each course to have undertaken peer work to assure academic standards with another institute | CM-HE, Head of QIU, VP (CQ), awarding bodies | Course team minutes, HE-SARs/course reports, EE reports, awarding body examination board minutes |

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| • the Intervention Policy outlines clear procedures for the identification, monitoring and improvement of underperforming courses (paragraph 34) | Employ the Intervention policy across the College to support HE courses which are underperforming | Interventions triggered by course retention falling below 90 per cent, concerns raised at data verification or a significant complaint being received about the course | VP (CQ), Head of QIU | Course data raised above 90 per cent or significant concern is addressed | Principalship, VP (CQ), Head of QIU, QSC | Intervention reports, HE-SAR/course reports |
| • the comprehensive and thorough cross-college Learning Resources Unit and Student Services annual evaluations contribute to the College self-assessment report and provide an effective basis for the planning and enhancement of students' learning (paragraph 35). | Central College support services to produce annual self-assessment to define support mechanisms for HE students | Produced throughout the year and submitted November | Head of Learning Resources Unit and Student Services | Achievement of annual QiPs and completion of subsequent SAR | VP (CQ) | Unit SARs and high-level SAR |

| Desirable | Action to be taken | Target date | Action by | Success Indicators | Reported to | Evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The team agreed the following areas where it would be **desired** to take action: | | | | | | |
| • review the content of its self-assessment and annual monitoring reports and the use of the interim course meetings to ensure that their focus is more consistent and effective (paragraph 19) | Evaluate current items discussed on HE course team meetings and produce a standard agenda | 08/12/10 | HE Forum and CM-HE | Production of agenda and use at course team meetings | QSC, CST | Minutes of team meetings using the new agenda |
| | Revise and update the College SAR format for HE courses of study | 23/03/11 | CM-HE and Head of QIU | Production of HE SAR format and implemented September 2011 | QSC, CST | HE-SAR template. Course HE-SAR applied to all non-HEI courses |
| | Provide training for course teams in the use of the new document formats | 04/05/11 and September 2011 | CM-HE via HE Forum | Completion of SARs in 2011/12. Positive comments from EEs | QSC, CM-HE | Use of agenda and HE-SAR. Clear feeding of HE-SAR into programme area SAR |
| • review the range of student feedback opportunities and their efficacy, to provide a more coherent and rationalised approach across the courses for the collection and use of students' perceptions (paragraph 37) | Standardise unit/module evaluations using the College's VLE (Moodle) for all courses | Set up by 08/12/10. Used by 04/07/11 | CM-HE and all course teams | All units/modules evaluated by students during 2010/11 using this method | CM-HE, QSC, GBSC | Unit/module evaluations. HE-SAR/course report reflections |
| | Update the College's Listening Policy to include a specific HE appendix | 14/01/11 | CM-HE and VP (CQ) | Policy updated and appendix included | VP (CQ), QSC | Student feedback and evidence of resulting improvements by course teams |

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| | Update the Standard Examination Board agenda to include 'unit evaluations' | 08/12/10 | CM-HE | Examination Board agenda updated and employed during 2011 | VP (CQ), QSC, awarding bodies | Minutes of examination boards. Student evaluation input |
| • explore with the awarding bodies the opportunities for encouraging students to make better use of awarding bodies' virtual learning environments (paragraph 41) | Liaise with university partners to ascertain exact cost and practical implications of student enrolment on VLEs | 17/12/10 | CM-HE and awarding bodies | Costs and practical implications defined | VP (CQ), DoS | Use of VLE if deemed appropriate (review undertaken during July 2011). Retention/ completion data |
| | Review all course requirements with regards to online resources to ascertain impact on learning | 17/12/10 | CM-HE with course teams | Course requirements documented and mapped to college resources and potential HEI resources | VP (CQ), DoS | As above |
| | Undertake a cost versus learning benefit analysis and implement VLE use if appropriate | 17/12/10 | VP (CQ), DoS | Analysis undertaken | VP (CQ), DoS, CM-HE | As above |
| • reconsider the content of the induction processes across its courses to ensure that they are tailored more specifically to students' needs (paragraph 45) | Review HE first impression survey data with specific reference to induction | 03/12/10 | CM-HE | Data extracted from survey and presented to HE Forum | HE Forum | Production of induction checklist |
| | Canvas all HE students via tutorial for feedforward on the induction process | 17/12/10 | Course teams | Results of student feedforward | CM-HE | As above |

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| | Ensure induction programmes provide sufficient detail and examples of progression for both full and part-time students and fully supports those progressing internally from level 3 courses | 04/05/11 | HE Forum | Production of minimum HE induction requirements checklist | VP (CQ), QSC | 2011 HE First Impression Survey results, course team minutes, HE-SAR/course reports for student satisfaction. Retention and completion data. Student progression information (post-course) |
| • review the programme specifications for the Edexcel courses to engage with QAA's guidelines for preparing programme specifications (paragraph 46). | Review model provided by HNC/D Business and align fully with QAA programme specification guidelines<br><br>Disseminate aligned model to all Edexcel courses and ensure use | 03/12/10<br><br><br><br><br><br>Dissemination 19/01/11. Application to courses 04/05/11 | CM-HE<br><br><br><br><br><br>CM-HE, PMs, course teams | Programme specification example produced<br><br><br>Example disseminated to HE teams. All courses have own specifications in place | Head of QIU<br><br><br><br><br>Head of QIU, VP (CQ) | Programme specification template<br><br><br><br><br>Course master files. EE reports |

**Glossary**

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| **AMR** | Annual Monitoring Report | | **NSS** | National Student Survey |
| **CM-HE** | Curriculum Manager - Higher Education | | **PMs** | Programme area managers |
| **CST** | Curriculum Strategy Team | | **QiPs** | Quality improvement plans |
| **DoS** | Director of School | | **QIU** | Quality Improvement Unit |
| **EE** | External examiner | | **QSC** | Quality Standards Committee |
| **GBSC** | Governing Body Standards Committee | | **SAR** | Self-assessment report |
| **HE** | Higher education | | **VLE** | Virtual learning environment |
| **HEI** | Higher education institution | | **VP (CQ)** | Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) |
| **IPR** | Individual performance review | | | |