



London Empire Academy

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

February 2012

Key findings about London Empire Academy

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in February 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality and Institute of Commercial Management.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding bodies.

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

Good practice

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

- an extensive range of high quality academic and welfare support, including the valuable handbook, makes a major contribution to helping students adjust to their studies and life in a foreign country (paragraphs 2.7, 2.8, 3.2)
- the virtual learning environment, called the Online Academy, has been carefully developed and managed to enhance student learning and provide an increasing range of useful information (paragraph 3.4).

Recommendations

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

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

- ensure a more systematic review and reporting of academic standards and quality (paragraphs 1.3, 2.12)
- introduce a more reliable method for the systematic collection of data on student retention, academic standing and achievement; such data should be used to inform the strategic and operational management of the provision (paragraph 2.9).

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

- ensure that the full range of current quality assurance responsibilities, including those in the job description for the Quality Manager, are securely incorporated in future management arrangements (paragraph 1.4)
- take action to ensure that the teaching and learning strategy is fully embedded in the ongoing operations of the Academy (paragraph 2.4)
- consider ways of building on the recent staff development day initiative to make development opportunities a regular feature of the academic calendar (paragraph 2.11)
- strengthen the generally effective arrangements for ensuring the accuracy of information by giving more attention to matters of important detail, including the accuracy of English in documentation and student notices (paragraphs 2.1, 3.7).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the London Empire Academy (the Academy). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the Academy discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the Academy delivers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality and Institute of Commercial Management. The review was carried out by Steve Harris, Clive Marsland, Trudy Stiles (reviewers) and David Lewis (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the Academy and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).² Evidence in support of the review included a range of internal documentation, such as key policy, procedure and strategy statements, administrative procedures, committee terms of reference and records, teaching plans and schedules, student survey questionnaires, student records, statistical data, role descriptions and staff profiles. The team looked at physical resources and held meetings with staff, students and former students. External reports, including that for the most recent spot check by The British Council, were made available.

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

- National Qualifications Framework: level indicators and descriptors
- Qualifications and Credit Framework: level indicators and descriptors
- Association of Business Executives: published unit syllabuses, assignment regulations and assessment criteria
- Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality: published syllabus descriptions, learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- Institute of Commercial Management: Approved Centre Status Memorandum of Understanding; published unit descriptors, learning outcomes and assessment methods
- British Council accreditation requirements.

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

The London Empire Academy is located in detached three-storey premises in Chiswick, West London. It was formed in 2000, offering English language and business English programmes, with recruitment mainly from South America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. In 2004, the Academy gained accreditation from the Association of British Language Schools and in 2006, from the British Council. In 2009, the provision was expanded to include business and management, with accreditation from the existing range of awarding organisations, plus the Association of Business Executives. This expansion coincided with a move into the current premises.

The Academy offers a range of internal English courses, including International English Language Testing System preparatory courses, in addition to the external higher education awards covered in the review. The academic structure comprises four teams: Management, Operations, English Teaching, and the Business Department where all of the higher

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

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

education awards are currently located. At the time of the review, there were 183 students overall, of whom 143, all full-time, were on the higher education awards. Students are recruited from 12 overseas states, with the large majority, over 85 per cent, from India and Pakistan. The recruitment cycles mean that the number of students at the time of the visit was about 100 fewer than in December 2011. There are eight teaching staff, including an Acting Head of Department and two 0.8 full-time equivalent part-time staff delivering the higher education awards. The Academy has a total of 20 staff including those in the Management and Operations teams who are responsible for admissions, marketing and student welfare.

At the time of the review, the Academy offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations:

Association of Business Executives

- Level 6 Graduate Integrated Diploma in Business Management (QCF level 6)
36 students

Note: the Certificate of Accreditation allows for the delivery of 19 specific certificates and diplomas.

Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality

- Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management (NQF level 7)
0 students

Institute of Commercial Management

- Postgraduate Diploma in Management (NQF level 7) 51 students
- Diploma/Advanced Diploma in Business Studies (NQF level 5/level 6) 56 students

Note: the Approved Centre Status allows for the delivery of 75 specific certificates and diplomas.

The provider's stated responsibilities

The Academy states that its responsibilities are broadly the same with each of its three awarding organisations. These responsibilities include the identification of curriculum needs and related curriculum development, as well as student recruitment, admission and guidance. The Academy also oversees staff development, teaching and learning, library and learning resources, student feedback and the accuracy of public information. The awarding organisations are responsible for programme content and all summative assessments. There is shared responsibility with the awarding organisations for the setting of assessment tasks, monitoring student retention, and providing programme and module public information.

Recent developments

The range of provision has been stable since the introduction of the business and management awards in 2009, although student numbers have fallen. The Academy is planning to introduce new level 5 Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificates in 2012. Following the extensive internal quality review in early 2011, library stock and computing provision have been extended, while the system of student representatives has been strengthened. Other recent developments include the virtual learning environment, Online Academy.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the Academy were invited to present a submission to the review team. The submission was produced and sent alongside the self-evaluation. It helpfully highlighted key topics under the headings of academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information, and proved extremely useful to the team in identifying matters to be discussed with staff and students during the visit.

A lead student representative prepared the submission, with support from the Academy that included briefing sessions with students on all of the programmes. The student representative used a range of activities to collect student views, including a questionnaire, a discussion forum and a simulated business activity in which groups identified development priorities for the Managing Director over the coming financial year. Overall, 175 higher education students, or over 72 per cent of those enrolled at the time, contributed to the submission. During the visit the team also held a meeting with current and former students. The lead student representative assisted with the arrangements for the visit by providing a valuable input to the review preparatory meeting and organising the student meeting.

Detailed findings about London Empire Academy

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The awarding organisations retain most key responsibilities in respect of academic standards, notably in defining curricula, and setting and marking summative assessments. They are also responsible for ensuring the levels of the awards within the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications and Credit Framework. The Academy has responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of these predetermined standards are protected in the management and delivery of the programmes. Reaccreditation by the Association of Business Executives in 2010 and a successful spot check inspection by the Institute of Commercial Management in 2011 offer evidence that the Academy is meeting its delegated responsibilities.

1.2 The straightforward management arrangements for academic standards are generally effective. The Managing Director has direct overall responsibility for standards, with the Head of Business and Director of Studies for English assuming day-to-day management of matters at the programme level. The Managing Director draws upon a range of mechanisms for assuring the oversight of standards, including formal teaching observations, conducted either personally or delegated to the Academy's Project Manager; the scrutiny of evaluative feedback, particularly student surveys; and the Active Project Log.

1.3 The Active Project Log has been introduced to monitor a set of recent project initiatives. Such a project-based approach is suitable for monitoring standards in the short term, as is evident in its use to monitor the outcomes of the recent extensive internal Quality Review. However, there is a need to revise the current arrangements to embed a mechanism that will ensure the more systematic review and reporting of academic standards and quality, either annually or more frequently. The project log is not, in its present form, suitable for this.

1.4 The self-evaluation includes reference to the role of Quality Manager within the senior management of the Academy. The post is in abeyance, but the Managing Director and the Project Manager have jointly carried out the quality management functions, which now include enhanced responsibilities in relation to academic standards. The Academy should ensure that these quality assurance responsibilities are securely incorporated within its future management arrangements.

1.5 At the programme level, unit learning outcomes and related assessment schemes are well understood and regularly communicated to participants through a variety of means. For staff, these include team meetings and staff development days, and for students, class briefings and the Online Academy, the Academy's virtual learning environment.

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

1.6 The Academy is making use of relevant external reference points. The award levels are appropriately mapped to the relevant external reference points, principally the National Qualifications Framework and the Qualifications and Credit Framework. Programme specifications or their syllabus outline equivalents are provided directly by the awarding organisations. The Academy is careful to ensure that staff and students understand and

operate to the approved curricula, disseminating relevant updating information promptly as it is provided by the awarding organisations.

1.7 The Academy operates clear lines of communication with the awarding organisations to support its engagement with external reference points. The Managing Director, Operations Director and Project Manager manage the links on strategic matters. The Project Manager, Head of Business and the Director of Studies are the principal contacts for matters affecting the operation of programmes. They are also responsible for communicating legal, regulatory and standards changes to the teaching teams. There are clear evidence trails to show the regular updating of external regulatory changes, as well as communication to students of changes which would affect them directly, for example examination protocols.

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

1.8 Programme design, specifications, summative assessment and moderation are all the responsibility of the awarding organisations. Students are helped to prepare for the assessments by the use of regular on-course tests. These allow them to become familiar with assessment criteria and receive formative feedback. The scrutiny of a sample set of such tests confirms their formative value. All test papers are annotated with corrections, useful summary feedback and an indicative grade. In a few instances the feedback comments do not fully reflect the indicative grade. Consistency might be helped by the use of a standard feedback cover sheet.

1.9 The Academy takes regular and serious note of the feedback it obtains from students to monitor standards and quality. This is evident from the records of the Student Staff Liaison Committee, the reports of the Head of School to the Managing Director, the Active Project Log and discussion with current and former students. Use is also made of the comments about student performance that the Academy receives from its awarding organisations. For example, after some poor examination results in 2010, alternative awards and their assessment arrangements have been analysed to ensure they are appropriate for the student profile. In addition, as part of a range of actions to strengthen student support, the Academy is now using past examination questions to increase students' understanding of assessment conventions and requirements.

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

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The Academy has a substantial range of delegated responsibilities in relation to the quality of learning opportunities. These include student recruitment, admission, induction and guidance; teaching and learning; the development of staff teaching and assessing skills; library and learning resources; and the quality review of the provision, including the collection and use of student feedback. The internal management responsibilities are overseen by the Managing Director and are broadly as described for academic standards in paragraph 1.2. These responsibilities are not accurately reflected in some internal documentation, such as the Management Structure diagram submitted with the self-evaluation, which should be corrected.

2.2 Overall, the arrangements for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities operate effectively. Quality assurance checks are regularly carried out through the use of student feedback, internal review and oversight, and departmental action planning. Evidence from the student submission, as well as from discussion with current and former students, provides a strong endorsement of the quality of the learning environment, including teaching and resources.

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

2.3 The use of external reference points is largely as described for academic standards in paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7. The Academy has recently had a spot inspection from the Institute of Commercial Management in August 2011 and a follow-up inspection from the British Council in October 2011. Both had successful outcomes, with the British Council report confirming that the Academy had effectively addressed a range of teaching, learning and student support issues arising from the initial inspection in 2011. The response to issues raised by the Association of Business Executives has been similarly thorough, as can be seen in paragraph 2.8.

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

2.4 The Academy has an explicit teaching and learning strategy, which offers a sound basis for promoting and monitoring effective practice. The strategy is not fully understood by staff and needs to be embedded more securely in day-to-day practice. The Managing Director maintains oversight of the quality of teaching, drawing upon the outcomes of formal termly class observations and a rolling programme of informal personal visits. The staff who undertake teaching observations are suitably qualified and experienced, and the observation reports are detailed and developmental. In a welcome initiative, the Academy is at an early stage of implementing a scheme of peer observation. This has the potential to further enhance teaching quality and provide valuable professional development for staff. Further assurance about the quality of teaching is provided by the rigorous staff recruitment policy, which helps to ensure that new staff are appropriately qualified for the teaching they undertake.

2.5 The Managing Director makes regular use of student feedback to evaluate the quality of teaching. While praising the high quality of current teaching, students also comment on the potential for enhancement. In discussion with the team, the Academy staff acknowledged that teaching would benefit from exposure to more staff and teaching and learning styles, as well as more current professional input, perhaps through external visits or visiting speakers. The self-evaluation expresses the Academy's intention to move toward more participative approaches to teaching. This might be helped by some further development of classroom technology.

2.6 The Academy is committed to the collection and use of student opinion. Student views are sought through a range of mechanisms, including student surveys and more informal means of feedback such as suggestion boxes and individual contacts with staff. Also, there is a Student Staff Liaison Committee, with student representation from the main courses. Meetings are monthly, and the minutes and actions are uploaded onto the Online Academy. The extensive internal quality review in 2011 covered a wide range of matters relating to the quality of learning opportunities. Consideration might be given to raising the profile of teaching and learning in any future reviews.

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

2.7 The arrangements for the support of students fully reflect the Academy's mission statement aim 'to foster a personalised approach to teaching by providing individual support and advice'. An extensive range of mechanisms and procedures are in place to ensure that students receive a high level of academic and welfare support. Current and former students offer an enthusiastic endorsement for the arrangements and the ways in which they have assisted them in adapting to their studies and life in a foreign country. The well qualified Director of Operations and a full-time Student Welfare Officer ensure that the varied welfare support arrangements operate effectively. There are thorough orientation procedures in place and students are given a direct telephone number that ensures 24-hour access to advice.

2.8 Academic support is organised to include individual tutorials on request, weekly revision classes and examination advice, as well as easy informal access to all staff. Following the problems with low pass rates on Association of Business Executives awards in 2010, the Academy has responded by further strengthening academic support. This has included the appointment of a specialist teacher who now offers a range of study skills support for all students in areas that include academic writing, examination techniques and preparation of curriculum vitae.

2.9 The Academy has begun to generate statistical data more systematically to support its monitoring of student achievement, retention and progression. Within the Department of Business, consideration is given to progression and achievement data by module, but the data is not yet routinely analysed at institution level, nor is the progression and achievement of students considered by intake cohorts and overall award. The centrally collected data on retention is limited in its scope and usefulness. There is need for a more reliable method for the systematic collection of data on retention, academic standing and achievement. Such data is needed to inform the strategic and operational management of the provision.

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

2.10 The Academy has a continuing professional development policy and the development needs of academic staff are identified mainly through classroom observations and the performance reviews of individual teachers. The self-evaluation includes a commitment to give staff greater access to training, which has until now been limited to internal activities.

2.11 The well documented staff induction requires that staff are introduced to the content and assessment criteria for the courses they teach. They are also trained in their roles as invigilators for the examinations set by awarding organisations. A recent initiative has been the introduction of a staff development day, which was used to focus on a development theme and also share experience. The day resulted in the production of detailed lesson plans for teaching in 2012. Having established the staff development day, the Academy should look at ways of building on the initiative to make professional development opportunities a regular feature of the academic calendar.

2.12 The monitoring and evaluation of staff development is undertaken directly by the Managing Director, Project Manager and Head of Business. This arrangement is satisfactory for the present scale of provision and development activity, but might usefully be considered as part of the systematic review procedures discussed in paragraph 1.3.

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

2.13 The Academy has a published resources policy, the oversight of which is the responsibility of the Director of Operations. The policy has been responsive when resource needs have been identified, for example in student feedback, the quality review of 2011 and the reports of external bodies, such as the British Council. The evidence for this includes: improved library stock and computing provision, wireless internet access; additional business and study skills teachers; increased tutorial and revision support; and the well developed Online Academy. The student submission suggested that some 20 per cent of students are dissatisfied with the quality of the learning environment. However, most of the issues identified in the submission had been addressed in advance of the visit. In discussion during the visit, students expressed their general satisfaction with the learning resources and the improvements made.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

3 Public information

How effectively does the provider's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?

3.1 The Academy provides clear and accurate information about its programmes for recruitment agents and potential and existing students. Information is contained in a published prospectus, a general student handbook and on the website. Published course descriptions offer detailed information on entry requirements, application procedures, course structure, duration, assessment, progression routes and contact points to support the application process. Course costs are transparent, with the fees for examinations, registration and awarding organisation membership being displayed separately from tuition fees.

3.2 A helpful range of approaches is used to ensure that students are well informed about academic matters and life in a foreign country. The student handbook is focused on welfare matters and is produced in hard copy and electronic forms. It contains a detailed guide to life and behaviour in the UK and the local area, with clear information and advice on finance, healthcare, accommodation, personal safety and emergency services. The students are unanimous in their appreciation of the handbook, which they judge to be particularly helpful for newcomers to London. Visa and immigration information is provided online, with links to other relevant sites. Detailed course information, including that produced by the awarding organisations, is published on the Online Academy and regularly updated. Online social networking sites are managed by the Academy staff to communicate with current and former students. Care is taken in the use of a Twitter page to ensure that study-related messages also provide examples of good written English. Notice boards are strategically positioned throughout the Academy, giving pertinent and up-to-date course information, such as timetables, awarding organisations' requirements, examination schedules and cultural and recreational activities.

3.3 A wide range of useful information is published for staff, including an extensive set of policies and procedures, a quality assurance manual and a staff handbook. The handbook offers detailed guidance, including grievance and disciplinary procedures, which is sensitively produced to reflect the needs of different categories of personnel.

3.4 The Online Academy has been carefully developed and managed, and now provides an extensive range of learning materials and general information. It is highly valued by students and makes an important contribution to ensuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning, as well as public information. The content includes useful assessment materials, such as the requirements of awarding organisations, advice on examination techniques and practice examination papers. The academic calendar, detailed lesson plans, study skills materials and reading lists are also readily accessible, alongside the handbook, current news items and an area for student representatives.

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

3.5 The Academy's responsibilities for ensuring the accuracy of public information are clearly distributed between the Marketing Director and the Student Welfare Officer. The Marketing Director manages all external promotional materials, as well as the accuracy of published course descriptions and formal application and entry requirements. The Student Welfare Officer oversees the student handbook and the detailed enrolment and living information given to students. The Marketing Director shares responsibility with the Head of Business for ensuring that the awarding organisations' information, such as examination regulations and subject specifications, are clearly communicated to potential and existing students.

3.6 Drafts for online and hardcopy publications are initially developed by the project team, before being checked by the Marketing Director. Hardcopy materials are signed off for a trial run. The Head of Business or Director of Studies for English approves the trial publication before it is finally approved by the Marketing Director for printing and uploading to the website or Online Academy. The Marketing Director also conducts periodic audits on the information published on the website and in the prospectus and student handbook. The Managing Director and Marketing Director maintain a monitoring role to check and update the website content. Students confirm that their views about the information provided for them are listened to and acted upon.

3.7 Overall, the procedures for ensuring the accuracy of public information are managed effectively. However, there is a need to strengthen the processes for checking details, including the accuracy of English. The information provided for students, staff and the review team, including that on notice boards, contained a variety of such minor errors.

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

Action plan³

London Empire Academy action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight in February 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an extensive range of high quality academic and welfare support, including the valuable handbook, makes a major contribution to helping students adjust to their studies and life in a foreign country (paragraphs 2.7, 2.8, 3.2) 	<p>Action 1: To improve the management and tracking of complaints that are directed to our Welfare Manager through the introduction of a <i>Complaints Tracking Spreadsheet</i> which captures all complaints received, the nature of our responses, the actions we take and ensures we meet our published response times</p>	The Complaints Tracking Spreadsheet introduced as a working tool by <u>26th March 2012</u>	Welfare Manager	<p>The Complaint Tracking Spreadsheet ensures complaints are managed to time and that consistent and transparent responses and actions are taken in dealing with individual complaints</p> <p>Wider issues are identified through the effective tracking and regular review of complaints using</p>	<p>This spreadsheet will be sent to the Director of Operations on a bimonthly basis and reviewed by the Director of Operations and Welfare Manager at an agreed point every two months</p> <p>A schedule of these dates will be maintained by the Welfare Manager</p>	Bimonthly review points between the Director of Operations and Welfare Manager, Operations Team Meetings, standing item on agenda of Quality Review Panel using the Quality Review Matrix

³ The provider has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the provider's awarding organisations.

	<p>These response times are five working days in the first instance and if requiring escalation an additional five working days (<i>As outlined in our Complaints Management Procedure CP15</i>)</p> <p>The spreadsheet will also contain a field outlining what preventative action can be taken where complaints highlight a wider issue related to the London Empire Academy</p> <p>Action 2: Ensure the Student Handbook remains accurate and up-to-date. The Student Handbook was reviewed for accuracy in January 2012. Quarterly reviews are required. The next review</p>	<p>Next review to be conducted by the end of April 2012</p> <p>Changes sent for sign off by <u>May 11th 2012</u>, with a revised publication date for the end of <u>May 2012</u></p>	<p>Marketing Coordinator to facilitate this process</p>	<p>this tool</p> <p>Appropriate actions are taken resolving these issues</p> <p>The Student Handbook continues to provide practical and up-to-date information and advice helping international students adjust to life in the UK</p>	<p>Changes made to the Student Handbook need to be agreed and signed off by the Director of Operations</p>	<p>Pre-publication review meetings with Director of Operations (Quarterly), reviewed twice a year by the Quality Review Panel using Quality Review Matrix</p>
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	point should be conducted by the end of April 2012 A particular area to focus on is the currency and accuracy of visa information					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the virtual learning environment, called the Online Academy, has been carefully developed and managed to enhance student learning and provide an increasing range of useful information (paragraph 3.4). 	<p>All teachers will update the Online Academy with their lesson plans and lecture notes This practice still needs to be more strongly embedded across teaching staff Outline Lesson Plans should be uploaded on the Online Academy for the entire term in the second week of that term Lecture notes should be uploaded on a weekly basis</p>	<p>All lesson plans for the summer term need to be on the Online Academy by <u>the 4th May 2012</u></p>	<p>This is the accountability of our Business Teachers reporting into our Managing Director</p>	<p>For the summer term students have lesson plans for each programme and are able to access lecture notes for each session within a week of that session taking place</p>	<p>In the short term Business Teachers will report into our Managing Director However, post recruitment, the management of this process should be the responsibility of the Quality and Compliance Manager</p>	<p>Managing Director (short term) and Quality and Compliance Manager (mid-term) conducts evaluation points in the second and final week of each term</p> <p>Termly review by Quality Review Panel using Quality Review Matrix</p>
<p>The team considers that it is advisable for the provider to:</p>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish a robust mechanism for ensuring the regular review and reporting of 	<p>The introduction of a Quality Review Panel This will replace the Active Project Log</p>	<p>Stage 1: Produce Terms of Reference, a Quality Review Matrix template</p>	<p>Stage 1: Produce Terms of Reference for the Quality Review Panel</p>	<p>Recent quality improvement initiatives, including peer observation</p>	<p>In the short term this will be managed by the Managing Director in the midterm this will</p>	<p>Annual review by Managing Director</p>

<p>academic standards and quality (paragraphs 1.3, 2.12)</p>	<p>as a long term governance arrangement for reviewing academic standards and the quality of provision</p> <p>The Quality Review Panel will meet once every six weeks (twice a term) to review academic standards using the Quality Review Matrix</p> <p>This tool will be developed from the Active Project Log but will focus on areas of quality that need to be maintained and enhanced over the mid to long term</p>	<p>and a schedule of meeting dates <u>23rd March 2012</u></p> <p>Stage 2: First date of the Quality Review Panel will be the <u>24th May 2012</u></p>	<p>and the Quality Review Matrix as a tool for ongoing reporting. This is the responsibility of the <u>acting Quality Manager</u>.</p> <p>Stage 2: The first meeting of the Quality Review Panel will be managed by the <u>Managing Director</u></p> <p>Stage 3: The Quality Review Panel and Quality Review Matrix will be managed over the mid to long term by the <u>Quality and Compliance Manager</u></p>	<p>programmes, staff development sessions, more structured tuition and revision classes and more rigorous lesson planning will be established over the mid to long term through the oversight of the Quality Review Panel</p> <p>Quality issues arising from exam performance or student feedback will be effectively acted upon by the Quality Review Panel</p>	<p>be managed by our Quality and Compliance Manager</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce a more reliable method for the systematic collection of data on student 	<p>Reconfigure Edupro (The London Empire Academy's learner data management</p>	<p>Stage 1: Introduce new functionality: <u>16th March 2012</u> ge 2:</p>	<p>Stage 1: Ensure Edupro has the necessary functionality to capture</p>	<p>The London Empire Academy uses student data on achievement and retention to</p>	<p>Managing Director</p>	<p>Quality Review Panel conducts termly reviews through Quality Review Matrix,</p>

<p>retention, academic standing and achievement; such data should be used to inform the strategic and operational management of the provision (paragraph 2.9).</p>	<p>system) to capture progress test results and module results and related actions for each candidate</p> <p>Once results have been issued at the end of each exam series a report will be produced from Edupro that provides an overview of results and retention for cohorts This data will be integrated into the Quality Review Matrix which is overseen by the Quality Review Panel</p>	<p>Ensure Edupro contains all programme and module titles:<u>27th April 2012</u></p> <p>Stage 3: Pilot and test the new functionality of Edupro Process to be completed by <u>18th May 2012</u></p> <p>Stage 4: Transfer all results information by <u>29th June 2012</u></p> <p>Stage 5: Introduce a termly reporting system using Edupro data by <u>13th July 2012</u></p>	<p>programme and module test results (both progress and final results)</p> <p>This is the responsibility of the <u>Managing Director of GPSoft</u></p> <p>Stage 2: <u>Administration Manager</u> sends the Managing Director of GPSoft a full listing of all programme and module titles</p> <p>Stage 3: <u>The Managing Director of the London Empire Academy</u> working with the Managing Director of GPSoft will coordinate piloting and testing of the new functionality</p>	<p>monitor its own effectiveness in teaching and welfare management</p> <p>Student data on achievement and retention is used to inform quality improvements going forward</p>		<p>annual review by Quality and Compliance Manager</p>
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			<p>Stage 4: All module result information transferred into Edupro by the end of June 2012</p> <p>This project will be overseen by the <u>Administration Manager</u></p> <p>Stage 5 Produce management reports using a standard template developed as part of the Quality Review Matrix</p> <p>This process will be overseen by the <u>Managing Director</u> in the short term and the <u>Quality and Compliance Manager</u> in the midterm</p>			
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Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is desirable for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the full range of current quality assurance responsibilities, including those in the job description for the Quality Manager, are securely incorporated in future management arrangements (paragraph 1.4) 	<p>Make the role of acting Quality Manager permanent, currently this role is project based This role will be performed three days a week, to be increased depending on the number of courses and students The position will combine the roles of Quality Manager with that of Compliance Manager to ensure this role manages all aspects of quality assurance at the London Empire Academy and also manages the ongoing accreditation arrangements and compliance activity with awarding</p>	<p>Produce a Job Description for this new role by <u>30th April 2010</u></p> <p>Recruit Quality and Compliance Manager by <u>27th July 2012</u></p>	Director of Operations	Quality and Compliance Manager in post by the end of August 2012, subject to their notice period Quality assurance arrangements, such as the management of the Quality Review Panel and the Annual Quality Review and areas of good practice are established and developed over the mid to long term through this appointment	Managing Director	Six week review of probation objectives, annual performance review

	organisations, the British Council and the Quality Assurance Agency					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> take action to ensure that the teaching and learning strategy is fully embedded in the ongoing operations of the Academy (paragraph 2.4) 	All staff will have a working familiarity with the teaching and learning strategy by the end of the summer term 2012 This will be achieved through the use of staff development days, revising job descriptions and performance objectives to align with this strategy and reviewing the working knowledge of staff of our teaching and learning strategy through our annual performance review process	<p>The next staff development day will on the <u>2nd May 2012</u></p> <p>The performance review process will be completed by the end of <u>August 2012</u></p>	<p>In the short term the <u>Managing Director</u> will take responsibility for disseminating the teaching and learning strategy through our next planned staff development day</p> <p><u>The Director of Operations</u> will oversee amendments to job descriptions and performance objectives and the management of our annual performance review process</p>	Best practice principles outlined in the teaching and learning strategy are clearly evidenced in teaching practice and the quality of resources and support provided to students	The Managing Director retains an overall accountability for Academic Standards	Peer observation programme, Operations Team Meetings, annual performance reviews, standing item of Quality Review Panel using the Quality Review Matrix
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider ways of building on the recent staff development day initiative to make development 	Rotate the management and organisation of staff development days each half term Build into the job	Agree a schedule of staff development days through 2012 by <u>23rd</u>	The next staff development day will be organised by our <u>Managing Director</u> as an	Teaching staff take ownership for the staff development days and provide a high quality	The Quality and Compliance Manager (in the mid term) The Managing	Development day evaluation forms, peer observation programme

<p>opportunities a regular feature of the academic calendar (paragraph 2.11)</p>	<p>descriptions of all our teaching staff that they are required to organise a half day session aimed at sharing and facilitating best practice in an area they feel particularly strongly about The next staff development day will focus on '<i>effectively using progress tests to support learning</i>'</p>	<p><u>March 2012</u> The next staff development day will be held on <u>2nd May 2012</u> and will be compulsory for staff to attend</p>	<p>exemplar The schedule will then rotate across our teaching staff with each permanent member of teaching staff responsible for organising a session The ongoing coordination of these development sessions will be the responsibility of the Quality and Compliance Manager once recruited</p>	<p>learning experience for colleagues All staff feel committed to their own continuous professional development. Learnings from these development sessions are used effectively to improve teaching practice and the quality of support provided to students</p>	<p>Director (in the short term)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen the generally effective arrangements for ensuring the accuracy of information by giving more attention to matters of important detail, including the accuracy of English in 	<p>Ensure all notices and published documentation are effectively second reviewed by a member of our English Teaching team in accordance with the <i>Procedures for the Publication of Material - PWC 157</i></p>	<p>Conduct an initial review of all published documentation on the London Empire Academy wall space by <u>3rd May 2012</u></p>	<p>English Teaching Team</p>	<p>All published information is accurate and clearly understood by students</p>	<p>The Quality Review Panel</p>	<p>Alternative meetings of the Quality Review Panel using the Quality Review Matrix</p>

<p>documentation and student notices (paragraphs 2.1, 3.7).</p>	<p>This second review needs to pay closer attention to issues of grammar and written accuracy Two members of our English Teaching team will ensure all notices are accurate and well written by conducting a phased review over the short term</p>					
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About QAA

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

QAA's aims are to:

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

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

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

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

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook⁴](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland*.

⁴ www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

highly trusted sponsor An education provider that the UK government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

learning opportunities The provision made for students' learning, including planned **programmes of study**, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios) and staff development.

learning outcome What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

operational definition A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reports.

programme (of study) An approved course of study which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

programme specifications Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **programmes of study**, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

provider An institution that offers courses of higher education, typically on behalf of a separate **awarding body or organisation**. In the context of REO, the term means an independent college.

public information Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

quality See **academic quality**.

subject benchmark statement A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

threshold academic standard The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications frameworks. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

widening participation Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.

RG 873 04/12

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Southgate House
Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000
Fax 01452 557070
Email comms@qaa.ac.uk
Web www.qaa.ac.uk

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2012

ISBN 978 1 84979 515 9

All QAA's publications are available on our website www.qaa.ac.uk

Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786