



West Dean College - The Edward James Foundation

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

February 2012

Key findings about West Dean College - The Edward James Foundation

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 University of Sussex.

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 this awarding body.

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

Good practice

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

- the provider's integrated and thorough engagement with the Academic Infrastructure is enhanced by the articulation of the precepts of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* in key documentation (paragraphs 1.3 and 3.2)
- student involvement in the quality assurance framework is comprehensive and results in significant enhancement of learning opportunities (paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5)
- learning and teaching are significantly enhanced through the successful integration of a variety of innovative activities into everyday practice (paragraph 2.5)
- students experience a comprehensive range of local and international extra-curricular inputs to their programmes, including working with artists in residence and employers (paragraph 2.6)
- the provider and its staff are committed to an integrated staff development strategy, including robust training needs' analysis, coupled with effective interaction with internal and external staff development practice (paragraph 2.15)
- effective management ensures that resources to support learning opportunities are highly specialised, robustly serviced, and developed by expert technicians (paragraph 2.19).

Recommendations

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

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

- articulate and amplify the learning and teaching strategy in documentation (paragraph 2.7)
- review information available for the management and operation of work-based placement (paragraph 2.16)
- continue to expand the provision of online teaching and learning information and materials, particularly for off-site study (paragraph 3.5).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at West Dean College - The Edward James Foundation (the provider). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the University of Sussex. The review was carried out by Jenny Anderson, Mark Cooper (reviewers) and David Ross (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).² Evidence in support of the review included the provider's self-evaluation document, a student written submission, a range of provider's documentation covering its management of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, a range of public information documents and key documents covering the formal links with the awarding body, a range of student work and a series of meetings with staff, students and employers.

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

- the Academic Infrastructure.

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

West Dean College (the College) is a self-supporting, privately funded organisation, offering a range of highly specialised advanced graduate and postgraduate provision. It is a mainly residential community located on a single campus and accommodated in historic buildings set in the South Downs National Park. It has an international profile and focuses upon particular aspects of conservation, fine art and other forms of creative practice. The College is part of The Edward James Foundation Ltd which was formed in 1964. It is a charitable educational trust, administered by a Board of Trustees.

The total enrolment on provider-taught programmes leading to an award in 2011-12 is 71 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, of which 56 FTEs are on programmes validated by the University of Sussex. In addition, the College runs approximately 700 short courses open to the public and students.

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

University of Sussex

- Graduate Diploma in Conservation of Books and Library Materials
- Graduate Diploma in Conservation of Ceramics
- Graduate Diploma in Conservation of Furniture and Related Objects
- Graduate Diploma in Conservation of Metalwork
- Graduate Diploma in Conservation of Clocks
- Graduate Diploma in Visual Arts

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

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

- Postgraduate Diploma in Conservation of Books and Library Materials
- Postgraduate Diploma in Conservation of Ceramics and Related Materials
- Postgraduate Diploma in Conservation of Furniture and Related Objects
- Postgraduate Diploma in Conservation of Clocks and Related Objects
- Postgraduate Diploma in Conservation of Metalwork
- Postgraduate Diploma in Sculpture
- Postgraduate Diploma in Painting and Drawing
- Postgraduate Diploma in Tapestry and Textile Art
- Postgraduate Diploma in Creative Writing

- Master's of Arts (MA) in Conservation Studies
- Master's of Arts (MA) in Conservation Studies
- Master's of Arts (MA) in Visual Arts
- Master's of Arts (MA) in Creative writing
- Master's of Arts (MA) in Fine Art (MFA)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College states in its self-evaluation document that it has robust academic quality assurance systems which have been developed throughout the last decade in collaboration with the University of Sussex. It has delegated responsibility for setting, grading and internal moderation of assessment, giving student feedback on assessment, recruitment and selection of students and liaison with employers. It has shared responsibility with the University of Sussex for identification of curriculum needs and curriculum development, strategic development of higher education, programme specifications, annual and other periodic monitoring of quality, staff development, student induction, student appeals and library resources.

The College executes its responsibilities through a number of closely related committees. These include: Academic Board, Academic Quality Committee, Library Committee, IT Committee (ISSG), Programme Team Meetings (course committees) and the Student Welfare Forum. The prime committee is the Academic Board which receives reports and papers from the other committees identified above.

Recent developments

The College has recently added programmes to its higher education portfolio, including: Master of Fine Art (2009), Postgraduate Diploma and MA in Creative Writing (2010), Graduate Diploma in Conservation of Clocks and Postgraduate Diploma in Conservation of Clocks and Related Objects (2011). A new MA Design programme validated by the University of Sussex will be also offered from 2013. The College has also recently reached agreement with the University of Sussex for students to be registered for practice-led PhD degrees, with joint supervision arrangements.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. A written submission was presented to the team at the time of submission of the self-evaluation document. One of the current student representatives on the Academic Quality Committee attended the initial REO briefing with QAA and subsequently worked, under guidance from the Head of Academic Affairs, to produce a submission, after consultation with all higher education students. Students also met with the coordinator at the preparatory meeting and with the review team at the visit.

Detailed findings about West Dean College - The Edward James Foundation

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College has a coherent, open and effective approach to the management of academic standards and oversight of higher education. The Principal oversees the management of higher education with support from senior colleagues, including the Head of Academic Affairs and Programme Leaders. All teaching staff are also closely associated with this process. The Head of Academic Affairs reports to the College Operations Management Group which underpins the Principal's oversight of the quality of provision. All of the postholders have clearly articulated and understood roles and responsibilities. The Academic Manager oversees the administration of higher education. A comprehensive set of key documents referring to all aspects of quality assurance and management is organised into a set of three volumes of information. The content and effective use of these is discussed in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2.

1.2 The process for disseminating and discussing all quality and standards-related documents is thorough and well executed. For example feedback, following the scrutiny of Annual Monitoring Reports and the Annual Examinations Report by the University of Sussex (the University) Collaborative Provisions Committee, is initially sent to the Head of Academic Affairs, then Programme Team Meetings and Academic Quality Committee for discussion. The Head of Academic Affairs shares chairmanship of the Academic Quality Committee with the three academic staff members. He also chairs all Programme Team Meetings. Reports to the Collaborative Provisions Committee are required to confirm that all actions identified in previous reports have been addressed or an update given for those cases not yet fully addressed. Further documentation, such as external examiners' reports, are also integrated into the process. The College produces an action plan based on internal discussions and subsequently formally responds to the University. The actions identified are rigorously monitored to completion by the Head of Academic Affairs and progress is reported at the Academic Quality Committee and Academic Board.

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

1.3 The College makes substantial and effective use of the components of the Academic Infrastructure as its principal external reference point. This, coupled with supporting documents from the University of Sussex, provides a strong underpinning of the College's management of standards and learning opportunities. Staff have a good working understanding in particular of *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and the precepts of appropriate sections of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*). For example, the precepts have been comprehensively mapped to various key documents including the recently prepared self-evaluation for re-recognition with the University of Sussex. Also, the precepts of the *Code of practice* and level descriptors in the FHEQ are used at a practical level to inform the assessment of student work. The College's integrated and thorough engagement with the Academic Infrastructure is enhanced by the articulation of the precepts of the *Code of practice* in key documentation.

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

1.4 The College has an excellent working relationship with the University of Sussex, which operates in accordance with the partnership agreements. For example, external examiners are appointed by the University for terms of four years. The College makes nominations to the University in this respect, with successful candidates being appointed in accordance with the University's policy and procedures, and confirmed by the University's Collaborative Provision Committee. External examiners' reports, after initial receipt by the University, are considered in detail by the Head of Academic Affairs who guides colleagues in the composition of appropriate responses. The College then submits the final response to the relevant external examiner with copies appended to the Annual Monitoring Report and also sent to the University.

1.5 The College produces an effective and rigorous Annual Examinations Report that clearly outlines the actions that are needed in order to enhance standards and the quality of learning opportunities. It provides external examiners with programme documents which give clear details of the assessment processes and grading schemes. External examiners visit the College during mid-term and end-of-term assessment periods, attend meetings of the assessment boards, sample and review examination scripts, and advise on the moderation of borderline marks.

1.6 The College produces effective and well constructed Annual Monitoring Reports that give assurance that all components of its management of academic standards are robust, thorough and well executed. These documents result in associated action plans for improvement which also identify areas of good practice for sharing between staff. These plans are submitted to the University in January each year for formal consideration and inform, for instance, the design of effective joint programmes of staff development, as discussed in paragraphs 2.12 to 2.15.

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 body.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 An Annual Operational Agreement underpins and supports the formal agreement between the College and the University. The Head of Academic Affairs has a remit that includes day-to-day responsibility for academic development and quality enhancement, and regularly liaises with the University of Sussex on matters related to academic quality assurance.

2.2 The College has an effective system of informal and formal communication between students and staff. All key committees have student representation. Students value and understand the role of the student representative and express their satisfaction that their views lead to effective changes in all aspects of the provision. Student involvement in the quality assurance framework is comprehensive and results in significant enhancement of learning opportunities.

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

2.3 The College has effective processes in place to ensure that the management and enhancement of learning opportunities are informed by the Academic infrastructure. As outlined in paragraph 1.3, this is the College's main source of external reference. There is appropriate mapping of the provision to the sections of the *Code of practice* that refer to learning opportunities. For example, sections of the *Code of practice* referring to students' complaints, assessment, recruitment and admission are covered by this process. All validated programmes are set at levels 6 and 7 as defined by the FHEQ.

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

2.4 The provider offers an effective and challenging learning and teaching environment that is conducive to student learning. Students make their views on this known through a variety of media, including representation on key committees and completion of an appropriate student survey which is, in part, designed by students themselves. Students demonstrate a mature sense of ownership of the provision and attend and participate in the annual cycle of committees. Their involvement ensures that issues raised are dealt with quickly and effectively by management. An example of this is the involvement of students in the redesign of the prospectus. Student involvement in the management processes at the College is robust and supports positive communication between staff, students and management and is good practice.

2.5 Students consider that their learning experience matches their expectations. They value the close relationship with staff that stems from a low staff-to-student ratio and extended class contact hours. A recent student survey indicated that all part-time MA Creative Writing students rated their tuition as excellent. Students also value the strong, practical focus in programmes and its theoretical and critical underpinning. For example, students on all programmes have unique access to artefacts of museum quality for study or repair and gain significant trust, responsibility and confidence during their work with them. The totality and holistic nature of the learning environment is manifested in many ways, including novel approaches to creativity in several modules, continuous feedback through peer-to-peer and staff interaction, and regular impromptu exhibitions of student work across the campus which elicit critical and ongoing appraisal. Students are taught in an effective environment which successfully integrates a variety of innovative activities into everyday practice.

2.6 Further enrichment of the student learning experience is provided in a number of effective extra-curricular ways. For example, project activities involving the College's estate, international placements, proactive student involvement with local schools, strong active relationships with high profile national and international museums, monuments and historic buildings, access to guest speakers, specialist collections and working closely with visiting fellows and artists in residence all contribute significantly. Additionally, former graduates work as teaching advisers and senior students have the opportunity to become mentors to new students. Students experience a comprehensive range of local and international extra-curricular inputs to their programmes, including working with artists in residence and employers.

2.7 A short learning and teaching strategy is contained in the provider's outline of its aims to promote an effective learning environment. However, the strategy does not cover the range of statements necessary to reflect the excellence of the staff's commitment to the teaching and assessment experience of the students, and there is a need for a more extensive articulation. The College is aware of this and has been offered advice from the University of Sussex on how to progress on this. The College is encouraged to amplify the learning and teaching strategy in key documentation.

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

2.8 The Academic Manager effectively executes her responsibilities for processing all full-time student applications. This includes day-to-day liaison with the UK Border Agency (UKBA). Prospective students are invited for a one-day selection and interview process and are required to complete a range of practical and communication tasks. This is particularly important for international students who may need to undertake the Secure English Language Test, as approved by the UKBA. Students who fail to meet the specified criteria are not given a visa entry to the UK for study at the College.

2.9 Students felt they were highly valued members of a small community with excellent pastoral, academic and welfare support from staff and peers. Each student has timetabled one-to-one tutorials and gets an effective assessment review at the end of all academic terms. Committees effectively monitor the various support processes, including evaluation of retention and progression statistics. These statistics also show that the College has an excellent retention level.

2.10 There are very effective processes in place for identifying and responding to student learning and language support needs. These are initially ascertained through the application form and at the interview. Language support is appropriately provided by open access English as a Foreign Language workshops delivered on-campus by Chichester College. Individual support for students with other learning support needs is also effectively provided when required. A part-time Student Welfare Officer, who is a qualified and experienced counsellor, provides good and timely support to all students. The Student Welfare Forum also meets to discuss their needs.

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

2.11 The provider's mission and ethos is effectively supported through staff development. There is a well established staff appraisal scheme which links directly with a continuing professional development programme. There is also a Staff Development Policy that is clearly outlined and well understood by staff. Staff are accountable to the Principal or his nominee for all their development, research and consultancy activities, and are actively encouraged to take part in a wide range of training and development activities. These activities are recorded and briefly evaluated by the College.

2.12 The identification of staff training and development needs is a shared responsibility between the individuals, their line managers and the Human Resources Manager who is responsible for the staff development budget. Staff have taken part in a range of relevant activities, including participation in in-house or external short courses, workshops and seminars, and attendance on appropriate programmes of study at local colleges, universities and other educational institutions. Additionally, staff participate in projects, or particular areas of work designed to develop their skills and knowledge, and regularly attend, and contribute to, conferences of national and international standing.

2.13 The strong links with the University of Sussex in all aspects of higher education provision are particularly manifested in support for staff development. In particular there is an excellent and fruitful relationship with the Teaching and Learning Development Unit, with workshops and seminars on both campuses.

2.14 The College has an appropriate working strategy for the appointment of new staff. Potential employees must demonstrate significant teaching experience at higher education level or agree to take a teaching qualification within two years of appointment, and are

mentored by more senior staff during their first year. Existing staff have appropriate professional qualifications and experience. The College recognises the need to have a larger proportion of staff with teaching doctorates or appropriate higher degrees and will be supporting this with remission from teaching in the future.

2.15 The College works closely with the University's Teaching and Learning Development Unit on a number of effective staff development initiatives. For example, there is a tailored two-year programme to support senior staff, programme leaders and programme tutors to develop teaching portfolios for Higher Education Academy Fellowship submission. Associate tutors are being supported to gain their Associate Fellowship. All staff are also being observed by the Teaching and Learning Development Unit over a two-year period and compulsory peer observation triangle reviews are taking place. Good practice is shared through all of the above activities. The College and its staff are committed to an integrated staff development strategy, featuring robust training needs' analysis, coupled with effective interaction with internal and external staff development practice.

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

2.16 Programme leaders have effective and well established links with work placement providers and provide appropriate support for this, including preparing a placement handout. Most students value their placements and are satisfied with the levels of support received from staff. Staff have responded appropriately to feedback in student questionnaires which identified support issues for some students in one area of work placement provision. There is also evidence that, in some cases, there has been a lack of information given to placement providers. The College is encouraged to review information available for the management and operation of work-based placement.

2.17 The College is well resourced for all provision. For example, students are highly satisfied with the stock, opening hours and individual support provided by the library. The library also provides links to appropriate online subscription-based databases and has plans to expand this. The College is also considering off-campus access to library materials. A library committee with student representation meets biannually to monitor feedback and consider developments. Outputs from this group are evaluated at other committees.

2.18 Students have access to an effective and well used intranet and appropriate generic computing facilities. These adequately substitute for the lack of a virtual learning environment, although the College is in the process of developing such a facility. Printing and copying is free. An Information Systems Steering Group with student representation meets biannually to review provision.

2.19 Specialist laboratory, workshop and spacious studio resources are excellent, of industry standard and fit for purpose, and are supported by dedicated, experienced and well-regarded technicians. Students requiring other facilities for specialist projects can obtain these elsewhere, including ready access to the University of Sussex resources. Overall, the College has excellent resources, including those of a specialist nature. These are effectively developed, managed and deployed and, in the case of the library, further supported through effective links between specialist staff and students. Effective management ensures that resources to support learning opportunities are highly specialised, robustly serviced, and developed by expert technicians.

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

3 Public information

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

3.1 The College produces and uses an excellent set of public information documents. This consists of student handbooks and programme specifications, information for prospective students, employers and staff, and a well constructed website. The main components of this set are three comprehensive and clearly written, interlinked volumes of information about programmes. These are well used and understood by staff, students and external examiners, and contain generic information, programme specifications and other key programme information.

3.2 Each volume has clear information relating to generic aims and learning outcomes, programme management and review, quality assurance processes, late submission of work, plagiarism and learning resources. Their contents are clearly mapped against the precepts of the *Code of practice*. Students have access to these documents as an addendum to the Student Handbook and content is regularly referred to in discussions with students at the start of a new unit of delivery. Volumes are updated as necessary and as part of the revalidation process with the University.

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

3.3 In addition to the information outlined in paragraph 1.4, the College has delegated responsibilities from the University of Sussex for developing the prospectus and student handbook and a set of very well crafted postcards which describe the attributes of each programme. The prospectus and handbooks provide comprehensive details of the validated programmes. They are well designed and attractive with detailed student and staff profiles.

3.4 The excellent website is well designed and easy to navigate, and reflects the ethos of the Edward James Foundation. It includes all appropriate details on programmes, entry requirements and photographs and videos of student work and life. Plans are underway to ensure the website is compatible with mobile delivery.

3.5 The recent student survey had identified a lack of information regarding programme choice for prospective students in both the prospectus and college website. Students confirmed that this had been rectified and that, overall they were very satisfied with progress made in this area. However, there are still gaps in both general prospectus information and in some key documentation that supports online study materials. The College is encouraged to continue to expand the provision of information and materials particularly for prospective students.

3.6 There are effective processes in place to ensure the accuracy of public information. Proofs of the prospectus are sent to department staff, the Head of Marketing and Communications, the Head of Academic Affairs and the Principal for checking accuracy and approval prior to final confirmation by the University of Sussex. The Student Handbook is

revised and published each academic year. Internal publications are developed, being checked by subject managers/programme leaders and the Head of Academic Affairs.

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

West Dean College - The Edward James Foundation action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight 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"> the provider's integrated and thorough engagement with the Academic Infrastructure is enhanced by the articulation of the precepts of the <i>Code of practice</i> in key documentation (paragraphs 1.3 and 3.2) 	We will reflect upon and respond to the changes from the <i>Code of Practice</i> to the Quality Code in preparation for revalidation of our Sussex-validated portfolio	2013-14	Principal, Head of Academic Affairs, programme leaders and tutors, University of Sussex	Successful revalidation	Principal, Academic Quality Committee, Academic Board	Annual programme reviews, Annual Monitoring Report, feedback from students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> student involvement in the quality assurance framework is comprehensive and results in significant enhancement of learning 	We will further clarify the existing links between student feedback (through student questionnaires and representation) and staff development	Autumn term 2012-13	Principal, Head of Academic Affairs, programme leaders and programme tutors	Staff development records and student feedback	Academic Board via Tutors' Forum	Academic Staff Appraisals

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 body.

opportunities (paragraphs 2.3 and 2.5)	needs					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learning and teaching are significantly enhanced through the successful integration of a variety of innovative activities into everyday practice (paragraph 2.5) 	Academic staff will be encouraged to extend their engagement with the University of Sussex Teaching and Learning Development Unit	Dec 2012	programme leaders, programme tutors and University of Sussex Teaching and Learning Development Unit	Achievement of FHEA, AHEA status	Academic Board and University of Sussex	Feedback from Teaching and Learning Development Unit, Programme Leaders, Programme Tutors and student questionnaires
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> students experience a comprehensive range of local and international extra-curricular inputs to their programmes, including working with artists in residence and employers (paragraph 2.6) 	Seek additional opportunities to enhance student experience through the development of, and increase in, the range and number of exchanges, residencies and fellowships	July 2013	Principal, programme leaders, programme tutors, employers and higher education institute partners	Increase number and range of local and international extra-curricular activities	Programme Team Meetings, Academic Board, Tutors' Forum	Feedback from students and tutors through informal communications and staff development records
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the provider and its staff are committed to an integrated staff development strategy, including robust training needs' analysis, coupled with effective interaction with internal and 	Build on the current provision ensuring appropriate opportunities are open to staff and to monitor needs and requirements	July 2013	Principal, heads of department, programme leaders, programme tutors, Human Resources Manager	Extended staff development records	Human Resources and line managers	Feedback from staff through appraisal and informal feedback from students

external staff development practice (paragraph 2.15)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective management ensures that resources to support learning opportunities are highly specialised, robustly serviced, and developed by expert technicians (paragraph 2.19). 	Incremental development of specialist resources on an annual basis as part of our capital budget process	Annual budget analysis in June 2012 and in future years	Principal, heads of department and programme leaders, Head of Business and Finance	Improved resources and positive feedback via Programme Team meetings and Operational Management Group Reports via heads of department, programme leaders and students	Programme Team meetings and Operational Management Group meetings	Heads of department, programme leaders' reports and student questionnaires
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"> articulate and amplify the learning and teaching strategy in documentation (paragraph 2.7) 	<p>Develop the teaching and learning strategy with input from the Director of the Teaching and Learning Development Unit at Sussex</p> <p>Revise and develop College documentation (eg Volume I section 5 to</p>	December 2012	Principal, Head of Academic Affairs, programme leaders, programme tutors and Training Learning and Development Unit	Evidence through quality outputs and outcomes that the strategy is successfully supporting the College's mission	Academic Board, Academic Quality Committee, University of Sussex	Student questionnaires and student representation on Academic Quality Committee and Academic Board

	<p>5.4) in such a way that it reflects the range of teaching and learning strategies employed by academic staff to deliver the very specific components of our specialist programmes</p> <p>Refer also to work relating to Associateship and Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy and included in Volume I</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review information available for the management and operation of work-based placement (paragraph 2.16) 	Implement new terms and conditions, related to work placements, in all work placements and supervisor forms	February 2013	Head of Academic Affairs, programme leaders and programme tutors	Successful completion of work-based placement unit of study with reports from employer network	Academic Board via Programme Team Meetings and Academic Quality Committee	Annual monitoring report, feedback from employers and student feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to expand the provision of online teaching and learning information and materials, particularly for off-site study (paragraph 3.5). 	Replace servers in order to dedicate more storage space to the intranet development	Revalidation 2013-14	Information Technology Committee, programme leaders and programme tutors	Improved student experience and access to additional learning opportunities	Academic Board, Academic Quality Committee, Information Technology Committee, Programme Team Meetings	Student feedback and Annual Monitoring Report

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:

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

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

quality See **academic quality**.

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

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

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

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