



# **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

**Summative review**

**Bournemouth and Poole College**

**March 2012**

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## **Preface**

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education. As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

## **Purpose of IQER**

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

## **The IQER process**

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

## **Developmental engagement**

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

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

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

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

## Summative review

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

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

## Evidence

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

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

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

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

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

## Outcomes of IQER

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

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

management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

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

## Executive summary

### **The Summative review of Bournemouth and Poole College carried out in March 2012**

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

### **Good practice**

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

- the annual review of programme/framework monitoring reports and the performance review processes are robust and effective in the maintenance of academic standards
- the College's proactive support for staff development, research, and scholarship strengthens the currency of the provision and facilitates research-informed teaching
- the variety of mechanisms for receiving and responding to student feedback enable the student voice to be heard effectively
- the high level of employer engagement contributes to curriculum design and assessment, and support for work-based learning and placements
- the provision and management of specialist industry-standard learning resources in computer generated imagery, engineering, digital design, music, and radio production enhances the student learning experience.

### **Recommendations**

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

The team considers that is **desirable** for the College to:

- expedite the completion and dissemination of the staff handbook
- continue to promote consistently across programmes the application of the student engagement policy, so as to enhance the quality of the learning experience of all students
- continue to enhance the information technology provision, including due attention to compatibility with new software, so that it continues to meet the learning needs of all higher education students.

## A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Bournemouth and Poole College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of Bournemouth University, Southampton Solent University and the University of Southampton. The review was carried out by Professor Christopher Gale, Professor Ann Holmes, Mr Clive Turner (reviewers) and Dr Richard Wheeler (coordinator).

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

3 In order to help HEFCE in gaining information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the Foundation Degree programmes delivered at the College.

4 The College is a large provider of further and higher education in the South West. It has delivered higher education programmes for almost 20 years, working on five sites across the conurbation, with higher education delivered on three of them: Bournemouth Lansdowne, Poole North Road and Lower Constitution Hill. For the academic year 2011-12, funded learner numbers total 681 full-time and 305 part-time students. All of these students are funded by HEFCE, making a total of 827 full-time equivalent students on higher education programmes. They are taught by 70 full-time and 23 part-time staff, supported by eight full-time and 10 part-time administrative staff.

5 The College mission embodies its aims and aspirations, as follows: 'Aspire - Achieve - Succeed'. The College aim is to provide an extensive curriculum at all levels which offers progression opportunities across the vocational and academic spectrum. It aims to align the higher education provision, where possible, with priority areas and sectors without losing its commitment to inclusion, lifelong learning and widening participation.

6 The higher education programmes that come within the scope of the review are listed below beneath their awarding bodies with full-time equivalent numbers in brackets.

### **Bournemouth University**

- BA (Hons) Applied Art and Design (15)
- BSc (Hons) 3D Computer Generated Imagery (35)
- FdA Applied Art and Design (9)
- FdSc Business Computing (12)
- FdSc Computing and Internet Technology (9)
- FdA Business and Management (66)

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- FdSc Computing (17)
- FdSc Computing with Networking (16)
- FdA Creative Multimedia Design (32)
- FdSc Computer Games Technology (27)
- FdSc Music and Sound Technology (21)
- FdA Professional Culinary Arts (27)
- FdA Early Years (23.5)
- FdA Finance and Law (25)
- FdA Marketing (35)
- BA Media Production (1)
- FdA Performing Arts (87)
- FdA Popular Music (32)
- FdA Public Services (24)
- FdA Radio Production (33)
- FdSc 3D Computer Generated Imagery (71)
- FdA Tourism (96)
- HNC/FdSc Electrical Technology (11)
- HNC Electronics and Computer Technology (10)
- HNC/FdSc Engineering (Manufacturing Management) (9.5)
- HNC/FdSc Engineering (Mechanical Design) (10)

### **Southampton Solent University**

- HNC Built Environment (21.5)

### **University of Southampton**

- BA (Hons) Post Compulsory Education and Training (14)
- Certificate in Education/PGCE (DTLLS/CTLLS) (37.5)

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

7 The partnership agreement with Bournemouth University is based on a Memorandum of Agreement, dated October 2008. The rationale of the agreement is to widen access to higher education and to assist in meeting local, regional, national and international needs. The university aims to provide appropriate professional development for College staff, as well as for its own staff. It has ultimate responsibility for the academic standards of its awards and for the quality of learning opportunities. Programme specifications and unit specifications are the intellectual property of the university, as the awarding institution. The College is subject to all university regulations and requirements in the delivery of programmes. The College is responsible for the promotion and marketing of programmes. Students are subject to the university's admission, assessment and academic appeal regulations and procedures.

8 The partnership arrangements with the University of Southampton and Southampton Solent University are limited in both cases to the delivery by the College of named programmes, with the University of Southampton in the field of Post Compulsory Education and with Southampton Solent University in construction. In both cases, the university has overall responsibility for the academic standards and quality of the programme and the College has delegated responsibility. In the partnership with the University of Southampton, this responsibility is exercised through the Post-Compulsory Education and Training Board of Studies which reports directly to its School of Education Academic Standards and Qualification Committee. Membership of the Board includes programme



tutors from the College. In the case of Southampton Solent University, a key role in the partnership is played by a university link tutor. The link tutor is responsible for ensuring that the College meets its obligations.

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

9 At present, all programmes are indirectly funded through the College's partner awarding bodies. Over 90 per cent of the provision is with Bournemouth University. However, the university's Senate in November 2011 adopted a policy of withdrawing its student numbers from partner institutions. This means that all of the College's Bournemouth University franchised provision will be phased out over a four-year period. The College has developed an exit strategy which safeguards the future of the programmes and interests of existing students during this period. In the context of government changes to student numbers control, a successful bid was made to HEFCE to replace the lost numbers. The College is now engaged in a planning process to establish a new higher education academic framework for the provision, within the context of the new funding arrangements. Recent programme-specific changes include the suspension of the 2011 recruitment to the FdA Applied Art and Design and the closure of the programme, and the closure of the BA Applied Art and Design at the end of the 2011-12 academic year because of poor recruitment and high cost.

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

10 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the team. A student written submission was included with the College's self-evaluation. It was prepared by students, without the involvement of staff, on the basis of questionnaire returns from students on all campuses, some informal interviews and evidence deriving from student focus groups. Student representatives took responsibility for the drafting of the submission, which the team found to be a valuable source of evidence. At a well attended and lively meeting with the team, students agreed that the submission broadly reflected wider student opinion, and they confirmed a generally positive view of the College's higher education provision.

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

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

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

11 The College operates a matrix management structure covering both further and higher education. The Assistant Director Higher Education plays a central role in the management of the HEFCE-funded provision, with clear reporting lines to the Vice Principal Academic and Student Affairs. The Assistant Director Higher Education chairs a number of the key committees, including the Higher Education Academic Group which is made up of programme leaders from across the College. They meet once per term to discuss issues relating to the provision and they constitute a central forum for sharing good practice. The College has recently appointed a Director of Higher Education and Adult Education who has a broader management role across both further and higher education and to whom the

heads of curriculum responsible for both further and higher education programmes report. The Director reports to the Vice Principal Academic and Student Affairs within the matrix structure. The Higher Education Manager and the Higher Education Unit report to the Vice Principal Finance and Planning.

12 Within the College there are a further seven higher education committees and groups which manage and deliver the programmes. These are the Higher Education Academic Group, the Higher Education Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee, the Higher Education Course Approval Sub-committee, the Higher Education Student Council, the Higher Education Unit Administrative Group, the Higher Education Cross-college Administration, and the Higher Education Programme Team Meetings. All ultimately report to the Higher Education Planning and Strategy Group. Together, these groups, boards and committees constitute an effective framework for the management, evaluation and reporting of the higher education provision

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

13 The Academic Infrastructure has been fully employed in validation processes where the *Code of practice* and the FHEQ have been reference points for the construction of programme specifications and unit definitions. The Academic Infrastructure is explicitly referenced in College policy documents. Assessments are designed with reference to the Academic Infrastructure to meet awarding body requirements. Learning outcomes are carefully designed with reference to the FHEQ and the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. Students are made aware of how the assessment procedures operate within this framework. Curriculum areas provide students with full marking criteria together with assignment briefing to ensure that students are aware of the requirements for attaining each level of achievement, including a reminder of the penalties for late submission.

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

14 The College has effective working relationships with its awarding bodies, as noted at the Developmental engagement and confirmed by external examiners. The College has three higher education management groups that monitor assessment procedures and adherence to awarding body regulations. These are the Higher Education Planning and Strategy Group, the Higher Education Quality and Standards Board, and the cross-institution Partnership Board. The Higher Education Planning and Strategy Group and the Higher Education Quality and Standards Board scrutinise the full range of Bournemouth University, University of Southampton, and Southampton Solent University programmes. A Partnership Board also scrutinises Bournemouth University provision delivered at the College, with more informal arrangements at team level filling the same purpose for University of Southampton and Southampton Solent University programmes. The Bournemouth Partnership Board meets twice each year and is responsible for the strategic development and monitoring of Bournemouth University partnerships. It also oversees assessment and actions arising from the annual review of programme monitoring. In addition, there are College performance reviews that take place four times each year and scrutinise key performance indicators of both higher education and further education programmes.

15 The College has effective procedures for annual programme monitoring and evaluation that are based on continuous programme review. Each programme unit is reviewed by the teaching team at the end of the academic year. Data from staff, students, employers, external examiners, awarding body link tutors, and student achievement contributes to a programme leader's report and team action plan. These documents together

form the annual review of programme/framework monitoring report, known in the College as the ARFM. The team identified as good practice the annual review of programme/framework monitoring reports and the performance review process which are robust and effective in the maintenance of academic standards.

16 Monitoring is overseen within the College by the Higher Education Quality and Standards Board and externally by the awarding body's quality department. The action plan is reviewed by the teaching team at programme team meetings held at least three times each year. The annual review of programme/framework monitoring report is initially reviewed internally for quality and effectiveness by the Higher Education Quality and Standards Board, which signs off the report. It is then passed to the awarding body's quality department for review and signed off there. Finally, it is reviewed by the partnership board and the awarding body's School Academic Standards committee. The programme team monitors progress across the year and executes the action plan. The action plan takes account of input from staff, students, achievement data, and external examiner reports. All action plans must be signed off by the Higher Education Quality and Standards Board. Assessment mechanisms employed are varied and commended by external examiners.

17 Where awards are provided by a number of partner colleges, cross-partner marking days are used to check the consistency of marking across the providers. Academic standards are agreed by cross-college assessment panels composed of all partner colleges and the awarding body. This allows College academic staff to be fully engaged in the moderating process. This process is chaired by the awarding body link tutor and is overseen by the external examiner. Actions resulting from this process are fed into the team's annual monitoring action plan which informs the assessment practice at the College and ensures that it is in line with awarding body requirements.

18 Assessment is planned before the start of the academic year and an assessment schedule is published in the programme handbook. Assessments are written by the teaching team and checked by a quality signatory who may be the awarding body link tutor or another member of the teaching team who is usually the second marker. All assessment marking, second marking, double marking and examination marking is verified by an external examiner and is sampled according to awarding body requirements. All project work is double marked. A further layer of checking through a moderation procedure occurs at awarding body level. Students are provided with a full assessment brief including the marking criteria and marked work is returned within three weeks, which is College policy for all higher education programmes. The College monitors whether this requirement has been met. Following a recent staff development day, the College has noted considerable improvement in the number of units meeting this requirement. Students informed the review team that they were satisfied with the timing and quality of the feedback on assessment and felt that it enabled them to improve their performance.

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

19 There is a designated staff development budget for higher education. The College recognises that high-quality higher education teaching is underpinned by research and scholarly activity and that access to this expertise is also perceived as part of the student experience of higher education. All higher education teaching staff are expected to engage in scholarship and/or research, including clearly identified activities and measurable targets which are agreed annually with managers during appraisal, and evaluated in the following cycle.

20 The College has established an annual College research conference, which constitutes a widely publicised event to expound the research work of College staff and to share good practice. The College has also established a collaborative research group with Bournemouth University which enables individual College staff to operate as partners in university research groups. This has led to joint papers being delivered at prestigious international conferences. Research findings inform teaching at the College and assist in the maintenance and advancement of academic standards. The team identified as good practice the College's proactive support for staff development, research and scholarship that strengthens the currency of the provision and facilitates research-informed teaching.

21 New staff and, in some cases, those who have a new role within the College are allocated a mentor. The College, assisted by the awarding bodies, runs induction courses to ensure new appointees understand their responsibilities. A staff handbook incorporating staff development information is in the course of preparation. The team recommend that it is desirable for the College to expedite the completion and dissemination of the staff handbook.

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

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

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

22 The arrangements for managing the quality of learning opportunities, including the comprehensive committee structure, are the same as those for academic standards set out in paragraphs 11 and 12, and paragraphs 14 to 17. Programme teams are directly responsible for delivering and managing the quality of their programmes on a day-to-day basis. Minuted programme committees are held throughout the academic year. Student representatives provide reports on areas for improvement as well as providing positive feedback. Topics include learning resources, staff development, external examiner reports, and action planning. Heads of curriculum have oversight of the disciplines within their areas and the management of teaching and learning.

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

23 The ultimate responsibility for the management of learning opportunities rests with the Vice Principal Academic and Student Affairs. The arrangements are set out in the College's Higher Education Strategy and correspond to those set out in paragraphs 14 to 17. The annual review of programme/framework monitoring report contains much information on the quality of learning opportunities as well as academic standards. It derives initially from reports by individual programme leaders and is informed by student unit evaluations, external examiner reports, link tutor reports, and other College surveys. Each report is considered by the programme committee, the Higher Education Quality and Standards Board and by the awarding institution at the Partnership Board or its equivalent. The team found that the process was effective and well understood by staff. Action plans are considered and monitored at programme committee meetings. The performance review process which takes place four times each year is fully engaged with the quality of learning

opportunities as well as with the maintenance of academic standards. The awarding body appoints the link tutor who liaises with the College, formally and informally, through the programme team. The team was informed that good practice is shared through the committee structure, team meetings, a range of staff development workshops, the annual research conference, and through a higher education newsletter.

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

24 The arrangements outlined in paragraph 13 indicate that the College is fully engaged with the Academic Infrastructure. This impacts positively on the quality of learning opportunities. New staff are informed about the Academic Infrastructure at induction and through the mentoring process. Bournemouth University also holds updating events to which College staff are invited. The College higher education newsletter is used to brief and update staff on a variety of current initiatives, including quality of learning issues; for example the programme specifications developed by College staff, in conjunction with university colleagues, link the teaching and learning strategy to learning outcomes and programme aims. Staff were able to give examples of how elements of the *Code of practice* had assisted in the development of a framework to inform the management of the admission of disabled students and the selection of appropriate work experience opportunities.

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

25 All staff teaching on higher education programmes are expected to be qualified to a level above the qualification to which they teach. In addition to assisting those who undertake higher degrees, support is provided for subject and technical updating and practice-based qualifications. Programmes also benefit from the engagement of practitioners to enable an applied approach to the curriculum. The College provides a range of staff development activity to support and enhance teaching and learning, including large group teaching, the role of tutors and peer observation training. The College has produced a 'higher education toolkit' to enable staff to reflect on good practice in teaching and learning and the enhancement of the student experience. The support for research contributes strongly to the development of research-informed teaching.

26 Staff are involved in lesson and peer observation. Lesson observation is a formal process resulting in a formal grading and a post-observation discussion. It feeds into personal development plans, the identification of staff development needs and the setting of targets. Staff participate in peer review and have a lesson observation once each year, followed by peer review in the following year. The peer observation process is linked to the Higher Education Academy Professional Standards Framework.

27 Students complete unit evaluations at the end of each session which include comments on the quality of the teaching and learning opportunities. These evaluations are disseminated to programme leaders and heads of curriculum by the Higher Education Unit and inform the annual review of programme/framework monitoring report. The student representatives are also able to raise concerns about teaching and learning at Student Council meetings. The College has a range of mechanisms to capture the student voice, both formally and informally, including open door meetings with the Principal. Students speak positively about their experience of the quality of the teaching, learning and staff support. The team identified as good practice the variety of mechanisms for receiving and responding to student feedback that enable the student voice to be heard effectively.

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

28 The Higher Education Unit provides administrative support for the provision. All applications to programmes are received by the unit and decisions are made by the programme leaders. On enrolment, each student is allocated a personal tutor who is a full-time academic member of staff. Time is allocated for tutorials, which include progress review and small group sessions. The role of the personal tutor is outlined in an academic tutor policy document. In addition, the College has introduced the post of Higher Education Learning Coach who provides pastoral support through an open door approach. A record of meetings is maintained and actions are taken, including referrals to the Learning Support Unit. Staff are briefed by the Learning Coach.

29 The Learner Support Unit publishes information on the support it offers to students, including those with additional learning needs. Such students are identified as part of the application process and liaison takes place with the awarding body in assessing their needs and developing an appropriate learning plan. All students undertake a diagnostic test on enrolment to identify any particular skills needs. The results are passed to the programme team. Although the College has a relatively small number of overseas students, pre-sessional English language support and further testing is available to them.

30 All students have a College and programme induction. Students are provided with awarding body and College handbooks, in addition to the programme handbook available on the College website. As well as skills support provided by the College, study skills support is also available through the Bournemouth University website.

31 The College has developed a student engagement policy for higher education programmes which includes the monitoring of student attendance at classes through the taking of registers and personal tutorial support for all students. However, some students who met the team felt strongly that the implementation of the policy is inconsistent and, on occasions, poor attendance impacts on the quality of the learning experience, especially where participation in pair and group activities is involved. The team recognises the work currently undertaken by staff to implement policy, address issues of concern in this area and to support students. The team recommends that it would be desirable for the College to continue to promote consistently across programmes the application of the student engagement policy, so as to enhance the quality of the learning experience for all students.

32 The College is committed to enhancing the employability of its students through work-based learning or a placement element on its programmes. There are well documented procedures for supporting students undertaking this activity and a student handbook is being piloted, as is an employer handbook. The review team heard from employers about their support for and involvement in work-based learning. The use of industrial panels attended by various employers from the region not only feeds into the curriculum but adds valuable support for the College's employability initiatives. The team identified as good practice the high level of employer engagement which contributes to curriculum design and assessment and provides support for work-based learning and placements.

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

33 Staff development for improving teaching and learning reflects the priorities, opportunities, arrangements and strengths of the activities set out in paragraphs 19 and 20, and 25 to 27. This includes workshops on teaching and learning, and support for peer review. College staff who teach on Bournemouth University programmes may attend workshops at the university, subject to its approval through the link tutor. The university

publishes a schedule of staff development activity at the beginning of each year. Staff can also apply to undertake an industrial secondment. Records of these and a log of staff development are maintained by the Higher Education Unit and demonstrate a high level of engagement by staff.

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

34 The College has invested strongly in the development of resources to support its higher education provision across three campuses. At the Poole campus there has been significant investment in the creation of the Digital Design Centre to enhance and support industry-standard learning resources. In addition, the facilities to support the Foundation Degree in Popular Music have been relocated and upgraded to provide recording studios, digital music laboratories and a higher education student common room. The team identified as good practice the College's provision and management of specialist industry standard learning resources in computer generated imagery, engineering, digital design, music, and radio production.

35 Each campus has a degree centre for use by the higher education students which contains social space and computing facilities. The College has its own student portal, 'MyBPC' on which students can access general, programme and unit documentation. Students have access through the Bournemouth University student portal, 'MyBU', to university information and guidance, including online library resources. Students on Southampton University and Southampton Solent University programmes also have access to external information, including the library resources, in the context of these partnerships.

36 Student unit evaluations, Bournemouth University Student Union partnership surveys, programme committees and Student Council meetings provide a range of mechanisms for obtaining feedback on the quality and management of the learning resources. Feedback is provided to the students on action taken through the committee action plans, the student representative system, and 'you said, we did' campaigns. While students expressed some concerns about the variability of the information technology provision, including problems of compatibility with new software, they were generally satisfied with the quality of the resources provided by the College and the access to those provided by the awarding bodies. However, the team recommends that, in order to enhance the quality of the provision, it is desirable for the College to continue to enhance the resources in information technology, including due attention to compatibility with new software, so that it continues to meet the learning needs of all the higher education students.

37 Students reported some challenges in the use of the virtual learning environment and suggested that reinforcement of earlier instruction in its use would be helpful. Navigation of the 'MyBPC' virtual learning environment was found to be challenging. While a search revealed a complete set of programme handbooks, it was evident that the construction of the site is ongoing. The 'MyBU' virtual learning environment portal, which a majority of students and staff suggested was the primary location for programme materials, was easier to navigate and contains much useful information for students. This site is hosted and managed by Bournemouth University and the College contributes to it through programme and unit team meetings with link tutors from the university.

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

### **Core theme 3: Public information**

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

38 According to the Memoranda of Agreement between the College and its three partners, the College is responsible for the production of its own promotional and publicity materials and in each case is obliged to acknowledge the awarding body and to seek approval of such materials prior to publication. The College is responsible for its own website, prospectus and other outward facing materials. The University of Southampton and Southampton Solent University prescribe and publish the programme handbooks. For Bournemouth University programmes, each programme team is responsible for preparing its own handbook, compliant with a template set by the university. Bournemouth University programme and unit specifications are prepared by the College in the context of the university template and are published on the university's website. When asked by the team, approximately half the students claimed that they looked at the university's website, rather than the College's, for information about the College provision.

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

39 The College has revised and implemented its procedures for the production of programme handbooks in accordance with the Developmental engagement action plan. Significant improvement in the consistency of content and availability of handbooks has been achieved. Control and checking processes are undertaken by the Higher Education Unit and the Assistant Director for Higher Education. The Vice Principal Academic and Student Affairs carries overall responsibility. Handbooks are checked internally according to a defined process and the website content is checked twice each year by Bournemouth University. The Higher Education Unit maintains an audit log of all adjustments which are necessary to keep the website up to date and consistent with the information published on the university website. While there is no systematic or formal involvement of students or employers in the checking of the website or other public information, student feedback has helped to inform the development of College media. Students are satisfied with the quality, availability, accuracy and usefulness of programme and College materials.

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



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

40 The Developmental engagement took place in February 2011. There were three lines of enquiry, as follows.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How does the College ensure that its assessment procedures are regarded by students as being fair, transparent and accurate?

**Line of enquiry 2:** How effective is the content and timing of feedback in enabling students to improve and progress in their learning?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How effective are staff development and scholarly activities in supporting assessment strategies and procedures?

41 The Developmental engagement team identified a number of areas of good practice. Effective working relationships with the awarding bodies underpin the assessment of students and secure academic standards. The management and monitoring of assessment and evaluation processes are thorough and effective. Effective employer engagement contributes to the design, delivery and assessment of programmes. The commitment of staff to research and scholarly activity enhances the academic ethos of the College. Good practice which contributes to the quality of learning opportunities includes the timely and effective staff feedback on assessed work, effective mechanisms for feedback from students on their learning experience, including assessment, and the use of work-based projects which ensures the vocational relevance and currency of the curriculum. The provision of specialist, industry standard learning resources in computer generated imagery supports effective learning and assessment and enriches the quality of feedback.

42 The Developmental engagement team made two desirable recommendations. The College should review the production, checking and distribution of programme handbooks to ensure consistency of practice and clarity of communication in the provision of assessment information to students. It should continue to enhance the spread of good practice in teaching, learning and assessment by collaborative activity across College sites.

## **D Foundation Degrees**

43 The College offers a wide range of Foundation Degrees, provided within the following faculties: Creative Industries, Health Care and Education, Professional and Academic, and Service Industries and Technology. Twenty-two of the Foundation Degree programmes are offered in partnership with Bournemouth University. These are listed in paragraph 6.

44 Programme design takes adequate account of the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. The Foundation Degree provision is geared to the employment needs of the local and national economy. Employers make an important contribution through the provision of student placements and in some cases contribute to the assessment of work-based learning which underpins the vocational nature of the programmes.

45 All the conclusions of the report in paragraphs 47 to 49 refer to the Foundation Degree provision as well as to other programmes.

## E Conclusions and summary of judgements

46 The team has identified a number of features of good practice in the College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, Bournemouth University, Southampton Solent University and Southampton University.

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

- the annual review of programme/framework monitoring reports and the performance review processes are robust and effective in the maintenance of academic standards (paragraphs 14, 15 and 23)
- the College's proactive support for staff development, research, and scholarship strengthens the currency of the provision and facilitates research-informed teaching (paragraphs 19, 20 and 25)
- the variety of mechanisms for receiving and responding to student feedback enable the student voice to be heard effectively (paragraph 27)
- the high level of employer engagement contributes to curriculum design and assessment, and support for work-based learning and placements (paragraph 32)
- the provision and management of specialist industry-standard learning resources in computer generated imagery, engineering, digital design, music and radio production enhances the student learning experience (paragraph 34).

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

49 The team considers that it is **desirable** for the College to:

- expedite the completion and dissemination of the staff handbook (paragraph 21)
- continue to promote consistently across programmes the application of the student engagement policy, so as to enhance the quality of the learning experience of all students (paragraph 31)
- continue to enhance the information technology provision, including due attention to compatibility with new software, so that it continues to meet the needs of all higher education students (paragraph 36).

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

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

52 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the

context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

<b>Bournemouth and Poole College action plan relating to the Summative review: March 2012</b>						
<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the annual review of programme/ framework monitoring reports and the performance review processes are robust and effective in the maintenance of academic standards (paragraphs 14, 15 and 23)</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure that the annual report on framework monitoring process is well understood and embedded by all programme leaders through further staff development sessions and the management of strict deadlines</p> <p>Make annual reports on framework monitoring more widely available on MyBPC intranet</p>	September 2012	<p>Higher Education Unit</p> <p>Assistant Director of Higher Education</p> <p>Higher Education and Access Manager</p> <p>Higher Education Unit</p>	<p>Teams deliver annual review of framework monitoring reports complete and on time</p> <p>Annual review of framework monitoring reports available online</p>	Higher Education Quality and Standards Board	Annual Report on Framework Monitoring readers reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the College's proactive support for staff development, research, and scholarship strengthens the</li> </ul>	Continue to support the College Annual Research Conference and provide further incentives for staff to engage in delivering presentations at	July 2013	Assistant Director Higher Education	Successful involvement of an increasing number of staff in research and scholarly activity	Higher Education Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee	<p>Annual Research Conference Proceedings</p> <p>External Conference attendance</p>

currency of the provision and facilitates research-informed teaching (paragraphs 19, 20 and 25)	external conferences			Presentations a conferences both nationally and internationally		Published papers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the variety of mechanisms for receiving and responding to student feedback enable the student voice to be heard effectively (paragraph 27)</li> </ul>	<p>Publicise widely the full range of student feedback mechanisms (Web, MyBPC, MyBU, posters)</p> <p>Higher Education Quality and Standards Board to review and evaluate the collation of data and information</p>	December 2012	<p>Higher Education Unit</p> <p>Student representatives</p>	Increased take-up and use of student feedback mechanisms	<p>Higher Education Quality and Standards Board</p> <p>Higher Education Student Council</p>	<p>Higher Education Student Council minutes</p> <p>Student Unit Evaluation</p> <p>Programme team meeting minutes</p> <p>Higher Education Quality and Standards Board minutes</p> <p>Partnership Board minutes</p> <p>National Student Survey</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the high level of employer engagement contributes to curriculum design and assessment and support for work-based learning and</li> </ul>	Share details of established Employer Forum across College sites and forge links with the Business Engagement Employer Forum	December 2012	Employers' Forum Coordinator	<p>Teams engage more effectively with employers</p> <p>Positive feedback from employers</p> <p>Positive student feedback on</p>	Higher Education Employers' Forum	<p>Annual Report on Framework Monitoring</p> <p>Direct feedback from employers at employers' forum</p> <p>Student feedback</p>

placements (paragraph 32)				placements		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the provision and management of specialist industry standard learning resources in computer generated imagery, engineering, digital design, music, and radio production enhances the student learning experience (paragraph 34)</li> </ul>	Hold staff development sessions in the Digital Design Centre, Radio Studios and Music Studios to allow others to see the resources and how they are deployed	December 2012	Computer Generated Imagery Team Music team Radio Team  Assistant Director of Higher Education  Higher Education and Access Manager	Good practice in Computer Generated Imagery, Engineering, Music and Radio shared across College sites and programmes	Higher Education Quality and Standards Board	Staff development attendance records
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expedite the completion and dissemination of the staff handbook (paragraph 21)</li> </ul>	Higher Education Staff Quality handbook to be completed and made available in printed version and online	July 2012	Assistant Director of Higher Education	Published by deadline	Higher Education Quality and Standards Board	Staff development feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to promote consistently across programmes the application of the student engagement policy,</li> </ul>	Monitor attendance across all programmes; assess the impact of attendance on the quality of the learning	December 2012	Programme teams  Higher Education Learning Coach	Improved attendance	Higher Education Quality and Standards Board	Student Unit Evaluation  Team meeting minutes

so as to enhance the quality of the learning experience of all students (paragraph 31)	experience in pair and group activities					Registers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to enhance the information technology provision, including due attention to compatibility with new software, so that it continues to meet the learning needs of all higher education students (paragraph 36)</li> </ul>	<p>Review the information technology provision, to ensure it continues to meet the learning needs of all the higher education students</p> <p>Monitor compatibility problems arising from new software</p>	December 2012	<p>Computer and Information Technology Group</p> <p>Programme Teams</p> <p>Media and Information Technology Section</p>	Improved student learning experience	Higher Education Planning and Strategy Group	<p>Computer and Information Technology Group minutes</p> <p>Team meeting minutes</p> <p>Student Unit Evaluation</p>

**RG 914 06/12**

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