



American InterContinental University, London

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

April 2012

Key findings about the American InterContinental University, London

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in April 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 Buckinghamshire New University, London South Bank University and the University for the Creative Arts.

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

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

Good practice

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

- effective working partnerships with awarding bodies (paragraph 1.3)
- the use of UK and US external reference points in the management of academic standards (paragraph 1.6)
- staff commitment to students' academic and pastoral support (paragraph 2.8).

Recommendations

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

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

- ensure that second marking and moderation assessment procedures are consistently applied across all higher education programmes (paragraph 1.9).

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

- continue to develop a formal and explicit mapping process to manage the benchmarking of all UK and US programmes (paragraph 1.7)
- monitor actions resulting from formal meetings to assist these in being taken to a successful conclusion (paragraph 2.3)
- develop a formal mechanism to compare and contrast the student experience across all programmes (paragraph 2.6)
- evaluate the impact of staff development on the students' learning experience (paragraph 2.10).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the American InterContinental University, London (the provider; the Campus). 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 Buckinghamshire New University, London South Bank University and the University for the Creative Arts. The review was carried out by Dr D Gwynne Harries, Mrs Catherine Symonds and Professor Graeme White (reviewers), and Mr Grant Horsburgh (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 a self-evaluation document and an extensive package of supporting information provided by the provider, meetings with staff, students and representatives from all three awarding partners, and reports of reviews by QAA.

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

- Academic Infrastructure
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*)
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)
- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ).

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

The American InterContinental University, London (the Campus) is a private university which operates on a for-profit basis. The Campus is the international branch campus of an American university that offers its own American degrees accredited by one of six regional accreditation bodies recognised by the US government's Department of Education. The Campus holds institutional and programme validations from three UK universities, which have reviewed the American curriculum and found that it meets the requirements of their own degree standards. The UK higher education provision delivered by the Campus is based on the American InterContinental University's common curriculum, while taking account of the *Code of practice* and the Quality Code expectations. The design of the curriculum provides the opportunity for Campus students to study towards two higher education awards, one American and one from the partner university, should they so wish.

The London South Bank University representative confirmed that a strategic review of its collaborative provision in 2010 led the University to inform all partners of its intention to withdraw from arrangements in which programmes are wholly developed and delivered by partner organisations. This led the Campus to seek new collaborative partners and in 2011 memoranda of cooperation were signed with Buckinghamshire New University and the University for the Creative Arts. The Campus has an agreement with London South Bank University to safeguard the interests of students currently studying a validated programme.

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

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

The Campus has been a subscribing member of QAA since 2004. The 2008 follow-up report noted that all recommendations and other matters included in the 2005 audit report published in 2006 had been addressed satisfactorily and identified a number of positive features. In September 2011, the Campus submitted an REO application in place of subscriber status, as the former was perceived as being more closely attuned to the profile of the institution, the UK Border Agency requirements and included a process of peer review.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding bodies, with the number of full-time equivalent students shown in brackets:

Buckinghamshire New University

- BA (Hons) Business Administration (135)

London South Bank University

- BA (Hons) Fashion Design (4)
- BA (Hons) Fashion Marketing (1)
- BA (Hons) Fashion Marketing and Design (4)
- BA (Hons) Interior Design (18)

University for the Creative Arts

- BA (Hons) Fashion Design (13)
- BA (Hons) Fashion Marketing (47)
- BA (Hons) Fashion Marketing and Design (32)
- BA (Hons) Interior Design (40)
- BA (Hons) Visual Communication (43)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The memoranda of cooperation with the awarding universities make it clear that, while ultimate responsibility for academic standards rests with the awarding bodies, the Campus has responsibility for the management of academic standards, and for the maintenance of the quality of learning opportunities, as approved by collaborative partners at the point of validation. The Campus has responsibility for reporting on the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities through annual monitoring. This is exercised through the Quality Management Board, which in turn devolves programme level responsibility to the programme chairs and programme faculty committees. Responsibility for published information relating to higher education programmes rests with the Campus, which has all information approved through its compliance processes prior to publication. In addition, the Campus liaises effectively with validating partners as necessary, with regard to public information in accordance with responsibilities set out within the respective memorandum of cooperation.

Recent developments

In the autumn of 2011, a revised committee structure was established to strengthen the Campus governance mechanism in order to make it more robust in the context of quality assurance. The Quality Management Board assumed responsibility for the management of standards and quality, previously held by the Quality Management Committee and the Academic Management Group. The information-sharing roles of the previous committees were devolved to the newly formed Campus Assembly. Student participation and representation on the Campus has been enhanced through the strengthening of the Student Council and through student representation on committees. Both the Quality Management Board and Campus Assembly have student members. A successful validation event was

held with Buckinghamshire New University for the existing American MBA and the Campus anticipates its first intake onto the dual British and American degree in the autumn term in 2012.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. A member of the Student Council was invited to lead the production of the submission. This individual developed a questionnaire based on topics discussed in the QAA student submission handbook to gather input from all higher education students. The questionnaire was circulated to students in classes and student forums. This was supplemented by the Student Council member interviewing students from each subject area to ensure that the matters included in the submission were representative. The final student submission was agreed by the Student Council. During the visit, the team met with a representative sample of 13 students covering all programmes. Views expressed by students during the meeting reflected those contained in the written submission. The written submission and the self-evaluation document had been made available to students on the student portal. The written submission and the meeting with students were effective in enabling higher education students to contribute to this review.

Detailed findings about the American InterContinental University, London

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The comprehensive self-evaluation documentation and discussions with staff and students indicate that the Campus is fulfilling effectively its responsibilities for the management of academic standards. The principal committee with responsibility for the management of academic standards is the Quality Management Board, which meets monthly and reports upwards to the Campus Cabinet. The Board's terms of reference embrace quality assurance, quality management and the student experience, with an emphasis on ensuring that identified actions are carried out. The active participation of the Campus Director gives the Board added weight, as does the presence of an external attendee, whose advice on matters of quality assurance is consistently sound and duly acted upon. Meeting minutes indicated that, within six months of its inception, all relevant programme faculty committees had submitted minutes for consideration by the Board and three of the four departments under review had also submitted minutes of their Student Forum.

1.2 In the autumn of 2011, the Campus implemented the current academic management structure. The Campus Director as Vice President of Academic Affairs has assumed specific management responsibility for academic standards. The post holder has overall responsibility for liaising with external examiners and with external accreditation partners. Board membership includes programme chairs and full-time teaching staff who act as academic leaders in their disciplines with wide-ranging responsibilities for the management of academic standards. The review of systems to manage academic standards and the restructuring of the Quality Management Board has created a formal and effective system, which is being implemented consistently across all faculties.

1.3 Awarding university representatives confirmed that the Campus is meeting its responsibilities for the management of academic standards. The collegiate nature of the team's meetings with staff and awarding university representatives and the support provided by partners to the Campus in developing the curriculum and in managing academic standards, as well as the quality of student learning, provide strong evidence of effective working partnerships and are a feature of good practice.

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

1.4 The Campus uses a range of external reference points to inform the management of academic standards. The memoranda of cooperation require the Campus to embed Academic Infrastructure expectations in the design and delivery of higher education programmes. The self-evaluation and discussions with staff indicated institutional familiarity with the Academic Infrastructure. Examples include a requirement to cite subject benchmark statements in programme specifications, discussion in committee of the *Code of practice* and consultations on the Quality Code, and references in an external examiner's report which confirmed that FHEQ and subject benchmark statement expectations have been met.

1.5 In its distinctive position of preparing students for both US and UK awards, the Campus seeks to apply the most helpful requirements of one system to the benefit of its

provision as a whole. The Campus participates in the US parent university's Institutional Effectiveness scheme. This is a quality assurance process applicable to US degrees, which aims at 'continuous quality improvement of programmes and services' based on the analysis of data and a 'comprehensive system of planning and evaluation'. This obliges academic and support departments to keep their performance under constant review, against local and university-wide targets. As an example of applying Academic Infrastructure expectations to US provision, the Campus is currently exploring the feasibility of including its US General Education provision within its existing external examining system.

1.6 The BA Business Administration has US recognition from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programmes. The Campus is in the process of being considered for accreditation by the US National Association of Schools of Art and Design. An assessor's visit in the autumn of 2011 provided positive feedback on students' work, the learning environment and staff engagement. The continuing commitment to using a variety of UK and US external reference points in the management of academic standards beyond those required for regulatory purposes is of benefit to students preparing for UK and US awards and is a feature of good practice.

1.7 As a means of ensuring consistency between UK and US awards the Campus has developed a marking grid in liaison with their partner universities, which maps UK degree learning outcomes in relevant provision to National Association of Schools of Art and Design competencies. However, Campus staff recognise that for other provision this is currently an informal process and a more explicit and formal benchmarking of UK and US programme requirements would be of benefit to students wishing to gain a dual award. It is recommended as desirable that the Campus continues to explore with its awarding partners the development of a formal and explicit process to manage the benchmarking of UK and US programme requirements.

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

1.8 External examiners have been appointed to all higher education programmes by the partner universities. Their reports are received by the Quality Management Board which monitors resulting action plans to ensure that these are implemented fully by heads of faculty and programme chairs. The processing of external examiners' reports is clearly explained in a comprehensive Quality Assurance Handbook. Reports confirm that the Campus is meeting the awarding bodies' requirements on the use of external examining to assure academic standards.

1.9 Student work revealed inconsistent application of the second-marking policy set out in the Quality Assurance Handbook in some subject areas. Discussions with staff acknowledged this, and there was evidence that it had been identified, for example, at a meeting of one subject's moderation board in January 2012. As a result, the programme chairs have implemented action in their subject areas to address this concern and to ensure that procedures are adhered to in future. It is recommended as advisable that the Campus ensures that in respect of second-marking and moderation assessment procedures are consistently applied across all higher education programmes.

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 bodies.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The comprehensive self-evaluation documentation and discussions with staff and students indicate that the Campus is fulfilling effectively its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities. The committees and management structure discussed in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 apply equally to the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.

2.2 The Campus has a number of effective monitoring processes to enable the quality of the student learning experience to be assured and enhanced. These include a formal system of annual programme monitoring and reporting and an effective management information system to generate data, including that of student attendance, which facilitates the early identification of students at risk of withdrawal.

2.3 However, meeting minutes are inconsistent in reporting consideration of quality management documentation. For example, while a constructive discussion of some programme monitoring reports took place in January 2011, there was no report of comparable discussion at a later date of postponed reports. Similarly, a review of external examiners' reports in June 2011 included only three reports and there is no subsequent minuted discussion of other reports. Discussions with staff acknowledged that their identification of such omissions had been a contributing factor to the restructuring of quality management systems. Staff expressed an intention to ensure that minutes systematically record when required actions have been signed off as complete by all committees and the Quality Management Board in particular. It is desirable that the Campus continues to refine the minuting of meetings so as to ensure that items deferred and carried forward for action remain on the agenda until they have been taken to a successful conclusion.

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

2.4 The Campus' use of external reference points discussed in paragraphs 1.3 to 1.6 apply equally to their use in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities.

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

2.5 The Campus has a clearly written Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy which takes account of the Campus mission to prepare students 'academically, personally and professionally for successful careers'. The strategy emphasises 'a high quality, career-focused learning experience' with due reference to 'experiential learning', 'blended learning' and 'assessment for learning'. Student work indicated that industry-relevant assignments justify the claims for a career focus across the programmes. The strategy states that assessment feedback is intended to serve a formative purpose, but staff indicated that the strategy is not used explicitly or systematically as a vehicle to maintain and enhance the quality of students' learning experience. There would be benefit in the strategy being formally considered by an appropriate forum to ensure its continued relevance to institutional practice.

2.6 Explicit references to the outcomes of student evaluations are inconsistently reported through the formal annual programme monitoring system. However, students gave examples of their opinions being taken into account both at departmental student forums and

at the Campus Student Council. Staff indicated that the lack of explicit reference to student opinion in annual programme monitoring reports was due to the awarding bodies' restrictions on their ability to amend report templates, but acknowledged that there is scope for addressing the outcomes of student evaluations in report appendices. In addition, a scrutiny of Quality Management Board minutes indicated no recorded debate of either good practice or concerns, identified in programme monitoring reports nor of common themes or exceptions to the norm arising from them. The team concluded that the Campus is missing an opportunity provided by the programme monitoring report process to assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is continuing to be maintained and enhanced. It is desirable that the Campus develops a formal mechanism to enable consideration of programme monitoring reports to compare and contrast the student experience across all higher education programmes.

2.7 All teaching staff are required to have appropriate qualifications in their subject area. UK awarding universities review all appointments and staff teaching on US programmes must meet accrediting body requirements. The preponderance of part-time teaching staff was largely because of the recruitment of industry practitioners. Programme chairs are responsible for performance-monitoring and development of part-time colleagues. Discussions with staff indicated that collegiate team working ensures that part-time staff are given full support.

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

2.8 The Campus regards student support as one of its institutional strengths. The student written submission praised the Campus Learning Centre, which offers English language and mathematics support and advice on academic writing as 'personal, efficient and reliable'. The Centre evaluates its work through following up the performance of students who have sought its advice and through annual monitoring under the Institutional Effectiveness scheme. There is also a Campus Counselling Centre offering students counselling support and a Student Affairs Department which has overall responsibility for careers services, immigration, ombudsman, retention and housing. The Campus employs admissions advisers to guide prospective students through all aspects of the process, academic advisers who help with course selection, and a Student Immigration Adviser who deals with immigration matters. A key appointment in student support is that of the Retention Manager and Ombudsman, who advises students at risk of withdrawing and mediates on complaints. The Manager is a member of the Campus Assembly and attends the Quality Management Board by agreement as required. The meeting with students confirmed their satisfaction with the high level of support provided. The team considers staff commitment to students' academic and pastoral support as a feature of good practice.

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

2.9 The Campus has a strong commitment to staff development. A wide range of internal and external development opportunities, including some provided by the awarding bodies, are available to teaching staff. Formal staff development is complemented by informal guidance at programme level. Arrangements include the mentoring of newly appointed staff, sometimes in response to recommendations by Assessment Moderation Boards, and peer observation, for which a standard template has been drawn up. The Campus has a clear policy statement covering leave to attend courses and payment of fees, and arrangements are in place for faculty training learning events, individuals' faculty development plans and quarterly professional development submissions. However, for teaching staff the Campus did not provide evidence of take-up of these opportunities, nor of their subsequent impact on the quality of learning opportunities.

2.10 The Campus acknowledged in its self-evaluation the need for a comprehensive staff development policy and that improvements could be made to its arrangements for staff development more generally. The Quality Management Board is overseeing the implementation of more consistent practice across different departments and addressing the perceived 'lack of balance' in staff development, favouring teaching over support staff. It is desirable that the Campus continues to keep all aspects of staff development under review, to ensure that its impact can be monitored in the interests of enhancing students' learning experience.

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

2.11 The Campus manages the provision of learning resources effectively through mechanisms such as programme monitoring reports and student forums, which provide the Quality Management Board with the means to identify and act upon any perceived shortcomings. The Campus has its own library stocked with books, journals and electronic resources. Departments recommend purchases within pre-set budgetary limits and there is a library committee to oversee its management. The student written submission praised the helpfulness of library staff and their openness to students' suggestions for new books. Similarly, students who met the team commended the availability of resources, particularly since Campus facilities could be supplemented from elsewhere in London. The location of the Campus also allows ready access to exhibitions, window displays and similar 'live' resources in central London. In keeping with its commitment to career-focused learning, where visas allow, the Campus arranges internships for students who achieve the necessary grades and work placements for others.

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 Campus communicates effectively its public information to students and other stakeholders. Public information is published on the parent university website, which provides extensive detail of the entire American InterContinental University provision, as well as information relevant to the London Campus. Comprehensive details of the organisation, programmes, admission requirements and student support arrangements are provided. Reference to the three awarding universities is included. Of the range of material provided, the Campus catalogue and student handbook were particularly useful documents. Despite the extensive amount of material included, students reported that they had found the website helpful.

3.2 Information for current students is provided on the student portal to which all students and faculty have access through the internet. This information is password-protected to ensure information security. The number of documents available to students is comprehensive and includes programme specifications, external examiners' reports and student support information. Personal information derived from registry-held details is secure

and accessible for students through the portal. In addition, some hard copy information is produced and this is the same as on the website or portal.

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

3.3 The provider has stringent controls associated with the management of its website information. This involves scrutiny of information in the UK and in the USA. All information on the Campus website is signed off by the Director of Regulatory Operations as well as the American parent university compliance office. Details of the process to be followed are published in a comprehensive Media Compliance Handbook. The process for the addition of material to the website is well understood; the mechanism for removing potentially inaccurate information is less formal, but the close working arrangements between the offices in the UK and USA ensure that it is timely and effective. The arrangements for assuring the accuracy of public information associated with the partner organisations are provided in the memoranda of cooperation. All partners confirmed that the process was effective and were able to provide examples of how this worked in practice.

3.4 The information provided for students on the student portal is also managed by the Director of Regulatory Operations. The Quality Management Board is responsible for the accuracy of the academic information. The Academic and Faculty Officer has the day-to-day responsibility for assuring the most up-to-date information is forwarded to the Director of Regulatory Operations for inclusion on the portal. The accuracy of personal information derived from Registry sources is the responsibility of the Registrar. This process for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information on the portal was well understood by staff and works effectively.

3.5 Most students found information provided on the portal useful. A few students commented that it was not always easy to find information they were seeking, a consequence of the amount of information provided. For example, all students had access to all programme specifications, external examiners' reports and programme monitoring reports. Discussions with staff indicated that the Campus is restrained by parent university requirements as to the structure and content of the student portal, but acknowledged that it could consider ways in which to limit the amount of information to that which is of relevance to the individual student.

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

American InterContinental University, London action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight April 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"> effective working partnerships with awarding bodies (paragraph 1.3) 	<p>Ensure enhancement of partnerships through systematic meetings and reporting</p> <p>The Campus to invite collaborative partners to biannual or annual partnerships meetings</p> <p>Further ad hoc meetings on as-needed basis</p> <p>Monthly Programme Chair meetings to be held to ensure that the Campus is in</p>	<p>To be formalised by the 16 July Quality Management Board</p> <p>Invitations to be sent to partners and dates presented to the August Quality Management Board</p> <p>To be formalised at the 16 July 2012 Quality</p>	<p>Vice President of Academic Affairs and Interim Director of Education</p> <p>Vice President of Academic Affairs and Interim Director of</p>	<p>Regular biannual or annual partnership meetings</p> <p>Updates with regard to partnerships to be standing agenda item at the Quality Management Board</p> <p>Timely meetings and successful analysis and completion of</p>	<p>Monthly reporting to Quality Management Board and to Campus Cabinet as required</p> <p>Quality Management Board at the Campus and</p>	<p>Success will be evaluated through dialogue with partners and on campus, as reported through the Quality Management Board and annual monitoring</p> <p>Successfully completed and reported to the Quality</p>

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 bodies.

	<p>compliance with accreditation/validation agreements</p> <p>Continued attendance at collaborative partners' internal meetings</p> <p>Ensure a systematic approach to reporting and other feedback as requested</p>	<p>Management Board</p> <p>Dates for academic year to be set by the August Quality Management Board</p> <p>As invited by collaborative partners</p> <p>Reporting dates to be put on annual academic calendar by the October Quality Management Board</p>	<p>Education</p> <p>Link tutors and the Campus gatekeepers</p> <p>Programme chairs and link tutors/gatekeepers</p>	<p>actions to remain in compliance</p> <p>Attendance at meetings held by collaborative partners</p> <p>Effective and timely reporting through appropriate channels</p> <p>External examiners' reports and programme responses, annual monitoring reports and other</p>	<p>link tutors and other gatekeepers at respective collaborative partners</p> <p>Vice President of Academic Affairs, Interim Director of Education and Quality Management Board</p> <p>Faculty committees, Quality Management Board and partners</p>	<p>Management Board and respective collaborative partners</p> <p>Successful acceptance of minutes of meetings and any reports by link tutors/gatekeepers by the Quality Management Board</p> <p>Ratification of reports by the Quality Management Board and partners</p>
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	<p>Work with partners to draw up proposed schedule for next academic year of shared staff development activities, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University for the Creative Arts Annual Learning and Teaching Conference at British Library, which was attended in January 2012 by the Campus members • Joint Campus/ University for the Creative Arts Assessment Workshop to be held at the Campus in autumn term 2012 	<p>Proposed schedule of shared activities to be presented to the Quality Management Board in September 2012</p>	<p>Interim Director of Education</p>	<p>reports, as requested by partners</p> <p>Implementation of schedule and presentation at Quality Management Board</p>	<p>Quality Management Board</p> <p>Also reported to collaborative partners, as appropriate</p>	<p>Evaluation through annual review of engagement in joint staff development activities at partnerships meetings and subsequent report to the Quality Management Board</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of UK and US external reference points in the management of academic 	<p>Regular updates and annual checks to ensure alignment with external reference points, for example <i>Code of practice</i>,</p>	<p>Create working group at the July 2012 Quality Management Board</p>	<p>Working group to be created by the Quality Management Board</p>	<p>100 per cent compliance without need for revision through committees</p>	<p>Quality Management Board, external examiners and respective partners</p>	<p>Evaluation confirmed by external examiners' reports, analysis of information</p>

standards (paragraph 1.6)	Council for Interior Design Accreditation Creation of a matrix as an analytical tool for submission to the Quality Management Board	Quarterly update to be initiated at the October 2012 Quality Management Board				presented in annual monitoring reports, and by award of degrees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff commitment to students' academic and pastoral support (paragraph 2.8). 	<p>Ensure that the information in evaluations, questionnaires, minutes of student forums and Campus Student Council minutes is analysed and reported at faculty committees, Quality Management Board (and Campus Assembly as necessary) for appropriate action</p> <p>Ensure that annual monitoring reports contain analysis of student feedback as above and comprehensive action points which are regularly reviewed</p>	<p>First report to the Quality Management Board in September 2012, then quarterly</p> <p>Dissemination of information to faculty committees (and Campus Assembly as appropriate)</p> <p>2011/2012 annual monitoring reports</p>	<p>Quality Management Board: Vice President of Student Affairs</p> <p>Faculty committees: programme chairs</p> <p>Vice President of Student Affairs and programme chairs</p>	<p>Analysis of all student feedback by the Quality Management Board and faculty committees</p> <p>Increased scores in student feedback</p> <p>Comprehensive inclusion of all issues identified for action in annual monitoring reports, and regular review and reporting of updates</p>	<p>Quality Management Board, Senior Management and Academic and Service Departments as appropriate</p> <p>Collaborative partners through annual monitoring reports</p> <p>Quality Management Board, faculty committees and collaborative partners</p>	<p>Effective identification of matters of good practice or concern and resulting action</p> <p>Ultimate evaluation depends upon student confirmation of enhancements</p> <p>Annual evaluation of annual monitoring reports by the Quality Management Board and collaborative partners Regular</p>

						evaluation of updates re action plans by the Quality Management Board
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is advisable for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that second marking and moderation assessment procedures are consistently applied across all higher education programmes (paragraph 1.9). 	<p>Create Double Marking and Moderation Policy</p> <p>Programme chairs to implement the Policy on all higher education programmes and in General Education with immediate effect after ratification by the Quality Management Board</p>	<p>Working group created by the Quality Management Board 18 June 2012</p> <p>Implementation during summer term (Quarter 3) 2012 (Quarter 3 runs from 16 July to 23 September 2012)</p>	<p>Quality Management Board</p> <p>Programme chairs</p>	<p>Agreement of the Policy at the Quality Management Board in July 2012</p> <p>Implementation of Policy on campus and presentation through faculty committees</p> <p>Successful audit reports (see item below)</p> <p>Reported through faculty committees and annual reporting process</p>	<p>Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Quality Management Board</p> <p>Director of Regulatory Operations as Auditor and the Quality Management Board</p> <p>Collaborative partners through</p>	<p>Evaluation by the Quality Management Board evident in acceptance of the Policy as rigorous and workable</p> <p>Successful evaluation via the Quality Management Board and Director of Regulatory Operations</p>

	<p>Programme chairs to create double marking schedule</p> <p>Create system for biannual audit and report to the Quality Management Board</p>	<p>Quality Management Board August 2012 and then annually</p> <p>Initial report to the Quality Management Board December 2012</p> <p>Biannual reports to be presented at February and August Quality Management Board meetings</p>	<p>Programme chairs</p> <p>Director of Regulatory Operations</p>	<p>Receipt of double marking schedules</p> <p>Audit of double marking and moderation carried out and any problems identified</p> <p>Review at faculty committees and report to the Quality Management Board</p>	<p>annual monitoring reports</p> <p>Director of Regulatory Operations and the Quality Management Board</p> <p>The Quality Management Board and faculty committees</p>	<p>Evaluation through audit and reports to the Quality Management Board</p> <p>Monitoring by partners through external examiners' reports and annual monitoring reports</p> <p>Evaluation through completion of audits, identification of problems and reports to the Quality Management Board</p>
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Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to develop a formal and explicit mapping process to manage the benchmarking of all UK and US programmes (paragraph 1.7) 	<p>Revisit the mapping of all programmes to external reference points and present in standard format</p> <p>Include General Education courses within mapping</p> <p>Engage in discussion with collaborative partners during development</p>	<p>Creation of working group to design mapping process: July</p> <p>Quality Management Board</p> <p>Scheduled completion date for first mapping: Quality Management Board February 2012</p>	Working group in conjunction with programme chairs	Successful creation of a mapping process which can consistently deliver effective benchmarking	Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Quality Management Board	<p>Evaluation will be reflected in a process which is embedded in the Campus quality systems and delivers accurate benchmarking</p> <p>Ultimate evaluation both internal and external via partners</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monitor actions resulting from formal meetings to assist these in being taken to a successful conclusion (paragraph 2.3) 	<p>Create standard format and process for reporting action points and closure of items in minutes of all formal academic meetings on campus</p> <p>Ensure that all minutes with action points follow lines of reporting</p>	<p>Implementation with immediate effect</p> <p>Report back to the Quality Management Board August 2012 and then annually</p>	Academic and Faculty Officer serving in the capacity of Quality Management Board Secretary	Evidence within all campus academic committee minutes (including faculty committees, student forums, Campus Assembly and Quality Management Board) that all items are reported and tracked until	Vice President of Academic Affairs and Chair of Quality Management Board	Successful evaluation will be based upon tracked and completed items as evidenced in all minutes

				completed and closed		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a formal mechanism to compare and contrast the student experience across all programmes (paragraph 2.6) 	<p>Create analytical matrix for comparing and contrasting the student experience across all programmes and General Education courses</p> <p>Produce report that documents the findings</p> <p>Ensure that all student feedback is analysed and incorporated and that, where necessary, focus groups or other mechanisms are used to gather further information as necessary</p>	<p>The Quality Management Board to create working group, led by the Vice President of Student Affairs July 2012</p> <p>Comparison reports to be received by the Quality Management Board on a quarterly basis starting in September 2012</p>	Vice President of Student Affairs and student affairs team	The creation of an effective method of comparing and contrasting the student experience in different programmes so that best practice can be uniformly implemented to give all students a uniform and good quality learning experience	Campus Director, Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Quality Management Board	Student feedback on a departmental basis to be analysed by the Quality Management Board for consistency across programmes (and courses in the case of General Education)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate the impact of staff development on the students' learning experience (paragraph 2.10). 	Working group already established (Quality Management Board 20 December 2011) to look at scope and balance of faculty and staff development policy	Working group already meeting Report to the Quality Management Board November 2012	Working group (elected members of the Quality Management Board) and Director of Human Resources	Completion of policy and implementation by the Campus Impact of staff development demonstrated through feedback	Quality Management Board	Evaluation through faculty and staff feedback, through peer evaluations and classroom observations

	<p>Working group to engage into peer and partner institution research and to create a blueprint to enhance faculty and staff development</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Working group (elected members of the Quality Management Board) and Director of Human Resources</p>	<p>Completion of blueprint, and first measurable results of staff development on student learning</p>	<p>Vice President of Academic Affairs and Quality Management Board</p>	<p>Evaluation will be through reflection of enhancements in student surveys and student focus groups</p>
	<p>Create system (which includes annual monitoring) for regular review, analysis and reporting of faculty and staff development to include analysis of direct and indirect impact on student learning experience</p>	<p>December 2012</p>	<p>Working group (elected members of the Quality Management Board) and Director of Human Resources</p>	<p>Successful reporting about the direct and indirect impact of faculty and staff development on student learning to the Quality Management Board and through annual monitoring reports</p>	<p>Vice President of Academic Affairs, Quality Management Board and collaborative partners (through annual monitoring reports)</p>	<p>Effectiveness of the evaluation system to be tracked via the impact on specific courses and through lecturers as documented in annual monitoring reports</p>

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 1 to 8, with levels 4 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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