



## **Holborn College**

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

June 2012

## Key findings about Holborn College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in June 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 Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Wales, and for the tuition support provided for University of London International Programmes.

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**:

- a significant body of staff scholarship and professional activity underpins academic standards and teaching and learning (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.12)
- the monitoring, analysis and outcomes of student surveys enhance the quality of teaching (paragraph 2.6)
- the induction of new teaching staff is thorough and effective (paragraph 2.14).

## 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:

- employ data analysis more extensively and effectively in the process of annual monitoring (paragraphs 1.9 and 2.11).

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

- give full consideration to the new Quality Code in staff development (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.2)
- implement and evaluate the new teaching and learning strategy (paragraph 2.4)
- consider student services and learning resources in the College annual review (paragraphs 2.8, 2.15 and 2.16)
- engage in more systematic analysis of staff development needs (paragraph 2.13)
- continue to develop the virtual learning environment (paragraph 2.17).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)<sup>1</sup> (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Holborn College (the provider; the College). 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 Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Wales, and tuition support it offers for University of London International Programmes. The review was carried out by Dr Julie Andreshak-Behrman, Mr Paul Chamberlain, Mr Peter Hymans (reviewers), and Dr Richard Wheeler (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included agreements with Liverpool John Moores University, the University of London and the University of Wales, the British Accreditation Council report, programme documents, the College and awarding bodies' policies and procedures, a quality assurance handbook, reports on the quality of provision, minutes of key committee meetings, a sample of student work, and meetings with students.

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

- Academic Infrastructure
- University of London International Programmes Registered Centre regulations
- The Law Society and General Council of the Bar requirements for undergraduate law degrees
- the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants criteria for student academic remission
- the British Accreditation Council accreditation criteria.

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

The Kaplan UK Group is part of Kaplan Inc, owned by the Washington Post Company. From late 2005, Holborn College (the College) was a member of Kaplan Higher Education International Group. In 2009, it joined the Kaplan UK group of companies. Kaplan's mission is to help individuals achieve their educational and career goals.

Since 1969, when the College started preparing students for the external law examinations of the University of London, it has delivered a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in law and business. The College has been accredited by the British Accreditation Council since 1985 and was reaccredited in December 2010. It was awarded the status of Registered Centre by the University of London in 2011. Currently, the College has 803 enrolled students, of whom 112 are from the UK. The majority of the students are international students, most of whom are from the Indian subcontinent, particularly India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The College also attracts students from Africa, particularly Nigeria, and east Asia. There are 21 full-time and six part-time teaching staff, six freelance staff and 25 support staff with some support from staff in other branches of the Kaplan organisation. At the time of the review, the College was located on a single campus in Woolwich in south-east London.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4).

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx).

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

#### **Liverpool John Moores University**

- LLM International Business and Commercial Law (43)

#### **University of London International Programmes**

- Diploma in Law (4)
- LLB (Hons) (33)

#### **University of Wales**

- BA (Hons) in Accountancy (28)
- BA (Hons) in Business Administration (56)
- BA (Hons) in Business Management (221)
- BA (Hons) in International Business Management (3)
- LLB (Hons) (286)
- MBA (with pathways) (129)

### **The provider's stated responsibilities**

For the franchised programme with Liverpool John Moores University and for the University of London International Programmes, the awarding bodies are responsible for the development of programme specifications, for summative assessment and for the appointment of the external examiners. For the University of Wales provision, the programme specifications are prepared by the College and are a key element in the submission for the validation of awards. The programme specifications are used as a reference point for the monitoring and review. The provider's stated responsibilities for the University of Wales provision are for programme delivery, formative and summative assessment and internal moderation, the quality of teaching and learning, and compliance with the awarding body's requirements for annual evaluation and review. Additionally, the College meets the requirements of the British Accreditation Council.

### **Recent developments**

In July 2012, the College will move from Woolwich to a central London campus at London Bridge, where it will be within walking distance of Kaplan Business School and Kaplan Law School, both of which are part of the Kaplan UK group of companies. This year, the College has seen an increase in applications from UK students and the UK is expected to become the major source of students for the College in the future. In January 2012, Liverpool John Moores University decided to withdraw from all UK franchised partnerships, including those with Holborn College. As a result, the last intake to the LLM International Business and Commercial Law will be in 2012. The University of Wales has also advised the College of changes to its validation arrangements from 2013. Current students will be unaffected by these changes. Negotiations with a new partner university to secure the future validation of the University of Wales provision are ongoing.

### **Students' contribution to the review**

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. The students decided on an innovative approach to this task by preparing a video presentation in which students from various programmes shared their experiences of teaching, learning and the social life at the College. The draft video was edited by the previous President of the Student Council, with the agreement that the

substantive content was not to be deleted, only any repetition. Student representatives also met the reviewers during the review and at the preparatory meeting. Both meetings provided positive evidence of student engagement with their programmes and enthusiastic support for teaching and learning at the College.

## Detailed findings about Holborn College

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College has effective management processes to fulfil its responsibilities to the three awarding bodies. The partnership agreements provide the basis for an overarching quality assurance framework. The Faculty Board, chaired by the Dean, oversees all matters related to the management of academic standards. The work of the Faculty Board is underpinned by academic committees with responsibility for academic planning and review and day-to-day maintenance of standards. The Faculty Board also reports on academic standards to an Academic Council which has a wider brief within parts of the larger Kaplan organisation. Although responsibility for academic standards clearly rests with the College, it is anticipated that in future links with the Academic Council will provide further opportunities for the development of the provision.

1.2 Effective oversight of procedures for programme approval, monitoring, modification and review is provided by the Quality and Enhancement Manager, who is also the principal liaison contact between the College and all the awarding bodies. The College has rigorous processes for the development, approval and internal validation of new programmes. Procedures for the management of academic standards and relationships with awarding bodies are outlined in a recently revised Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook.

1.3 The College is responsible for the admission of students and the provision of learning and teaching. Each award has a programme manager appointed by the College, who is responsible for programme delivery. Each has a formally constituted programme committee, with student representation, which meets regularly throughout the year. Programme committee meetings are preceded by coordinated meetings of the Staff Student Liaison Committee. Planning and coordinating the employment and development of the programme managers are the responsibility of an Academic Manager who works with the Dean and other senior staff to manage the provision. Regular programme managers' meetings with the Academic Manager are held to discuss programme issues and to facilitate the sharing of good practice.

1.4 Students contribute to annual review through feedback obtained from the Staff Student Liaison Committee, programme committees and student questionnaires. Students that met the team confirmed that they are clearly informed about the assessment requirements and that they understand how grade criteria are applied and differentiated by level.

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

1.5 Staff demonstrate engagement with the Academic Infrastructure, including *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* and the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (the Code of practice)*, through the preparation of programme specifications, assignment briefs and programme handbooks for the provision validated by the University of Wales. Staff teaching on Liverpool John Moores University and University of London International Programmes have less direct engagement with the Academic Infrastructure, but benefit from the awareness being raised through awarding bodies' staff development. The Academic Manager and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager have

oversight of the College's response to external reference points. The College has undertaken a recent mapping exercise to outline how its management structures provide reference points for ensuring staff awareness of the requirements of the Academic Infrastructure. Although this has provided a valuable base for ensuring effective use of the *Code of practice*, scope exists for more activity to prepare staff for the use of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). It is desirable that the College gives full consideration to the new Quality Code in the context of the planned expansion of in-house staff development.

1.6 The College has extensive involvement with other external bodies through its partnership with Liverpool John Moores University for the LLM programme and with the University of London International Programmes as a recognised centre for the delivery of tuition support for the Diploma in Law and LLB (Honours). For its law provision, the College meets the requirements of The Law Society, the General Council of the Bar and the Joint Academic Stage Board. Accountancy programmes are subject to regulations of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. The College exercises powers as a recognised institution to negotiate exemptions for students from some elements of the fundamental level of accountancy awards.

1.7 Staff engage in a significant body of scholarship and professional activity. It is undertaken in partnership with the awarding and professional bodies and the Kaplan organisation's own Tutor Academy, as indicated in paragraph 2.12. The College has a commitment to support three members of staff on higher degrees each year by paying their tuition fees and allowing them study leave. The team concludes that staff scholarship and professional activity underpin the maintenance of academic standards and teaching and learning, and that this constitutes good practice.

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

1.8 Academic standards are assured through effective partnership with the College's awarding bodies. Annual programme monitoring is the primary means by which the College assures itself and its partners that appropriate academic standards are set, maintained and enhanced. The awarding bodies provide the College with templates and guidance for the production of annual monitoring reports. The one exception is the annual monitoring exercise carried out externally by the University of London (Institution Annual Monitoring) as a centre recognised by the University of London International Programmes.

1.9 Programme managers have responsibility for the management of annual monitoring, ensuring that programmes are continuously monitored, reports completed and action plans implemented. The Faculty Board receives, considers and provides feedback on annual reports. The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager produces a report for the Faculty Board on institutional matters arising from the annual monitoring process. The preparation and processing of individual annual monitoring reports is effective and thorough. The College has developed a template to consolidate monitoring information in an institutional annual monitoring report, which will summarise key points, present and analyse cohort data and focus on specific areas of strategic or institutional interest.

1.10 Limited cohort data is currently presented in annual monitoring reports but lacks effective analysis. The College has recently implemented a new management information system, which is being further developed. It is designed to improve the capability for comparative analysis at module and award levels and to provide relevant benchmarking data to strengthen annual monitoring and inform future practice at programme and College levels. The system is not yet fully operational and is not yet embedded at programme level in

annual monitoring reports. The team concludes that it is advisable for staff to employ data analysis more extensively and effectively in annual monitoring.

1.11 External examiners make oral reports to examination boards and submit their written reports to the College as well as to the awarding bodies. Responses to the recommendations of external examiners' reports are addressed by senior management and programme committees, and outcomes are tracked through the process of annual monitoring.

1.12 In the past two years, all programmes have undergone periodic or quinquennial review by the awarding bodies. The team confirms the effectiveness of these processes in assuring academic standards and in providing opportunities to adjust the curriculum in the light of annual monitoring and other student feedback. The robust nature of the systems operating at the College was demonstrated through its responses to the quinquennial review in 2011 of the LLB (Hons), validated by the University of Wales, which required swift and rigorous action in support of academic standards. The external examiner for the programme confirms the effectiveness of the changes to assessment and related matters.

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 responsibilities for the management of the quality of learning opportunities and reporting arrangements reflect those detailed in paragraphs 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

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

2.2 As indicated in paragraph 1.5, staff are engaged with the Academic Infrastructure. However, the exercise undertaken to map the precepts of the *Code of practice* to College policies and procedures now needs to be extended to a thorough analysis of all aspects of the new Quality Code from the academic year 2012-13.

2.3 For the undergraduate law programmes, the Joint Academic Stage Board issues guidance on the determination of learning resources required. The College meets with the requirements of all precepts of the guidance and in some cases, notably that on continuing staff development, exceeds them. Likewise, accountancy programmes meet the requirements of the professional body.

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

2.4 The College has produced a new draft learning and teaching strategy as a discussion document. Teaching staff are currently being consulted on the content of the strategy and it is planned to implement the revised strategy from September 2012. It will then need to be evaluated to consider its impact on practice. The team concludes that it is desirable for the College to implement and evaluate the new teaching and learning strategy.



2.5 The College has recently introduced a new peer observation of teaching scheme with the primary aim of encouraging a dialogue between staff on good practice. The documentation supporting the scheme does not provide guidance on standards, but asks colleagues to compare the teaching of the observed staff with their own practice. Staff undertaking peer observation have been given initial training. All permanent full-time teaching staff have now been observed and undertaken observations. They report that the process enhances their teaching. The scheme has the potential to contribute further to staff development.

2.6 Students value highly the teaching they receive. They are able to comment twice termly on their experience of teaching. The College seeks feedback on individual staff performance through mid-term and end-of-semester student surveys. The results of these surveys are tabulated according to individual named staff, showing overall performance and changes from previous surveys. Staff who perform poorly are given support by the Academic Manager and programme managers, and performance is monitored through the Learning and Teaching Committee. The monitoring, analysis and outcomes of student surveys enhance the quality of teaching and constitute good practice.

2.7 The College is responsible for the recruitment and selection of academic staff. Current academic staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. New lecturers are expected to be academically qualified to at least the level they will be expected to teach, although some staff are appointed predominantly on grounds of experience. The latter are expected to engage in further study. The appointment and selection policy of the College incorporates equal opportunities awareness. The awarding bodies do not approve appointments, although they are sent copies of curriculum vitae.

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

2.8 Students express mixed views about support services, ranging from excellent to unsatisfactory in a few cases. The electronic mid-term student questionnaire contains sections on student services and the library as well as tutor performance (see also paragraph 2.6). The Librarian liaises with programme managers to ensure that the provision meets the needs of learners. However, there is no formal self-evaluation of the library service. It is desirable for the College to consider student services and learning resources in the College annual review (see also paragraphs 2.16 and 2.17).

2.9 Programme managers act as a point of contact for matters of concern relating to both academic and pastoral issues. Students confirm that they are responsive to their personal needs and provide appropriate support. The College has recently piloted a new personal tutor scheme within one of the teaching programmes. The College uses a comprehensive guide to personal tutoring, which gives clear guidance on how to carry out the role and when to refer the student to other agencies. Students were not able to comment on the effectiveness of the process, as few had been included in the pilot, but the staff involved were enthusiastic about the potential of the scheme to benefit students.

2.10 The College anticipates that the changing nature of the student body, involving a move from a predominantly international body to predominantly home students, may increase the need for learning support services. The College has recently appointed a Well-being Officer whose role includes ensuring that the needs of students with additional learning requirements are met.

2.11 The introduction of the new student information system provides an opportunity for the collection and analysis of data, as indicated in paragraph 1.9. In the past, the College had not been able to collect and analyse student retention data satisfactorily. It acknowledges that progression rates have been low in some programmes and that greater

attention needs to be paid to student performance at module level. It is anticipated that the new system will contribute to the identification of future student support needs.

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

2.12 The College has a culture of encouraging staff to undertake professional development, including support for higher degrees and attendance at conferences, as noted in paragraph 1.7. It uses the facilities of the Kaplan Tutor Academy, which delivers training and development programmes for lecturers and tutors across the Kaplan organisation. This enhances the quality of learning opportunities for students and contributes to the good practice indicated in paragraph 1.7.

2.13 The College has a draft staff development policy which is linked with The Higher Education Academy's UK Professional Standards Framework. The policy does not yet specify clear targets in the context of both institutional and personal needs, but the Learning and Teaching Group has facilitated some staff development sessions, highlighting good practice. Sessions have included classroom management and effective teaching, managing disruptive and difficult situations, and the problems of academic adjustment for international students. The College recognises that staff development has previously been dependent on individual staff to take the initiative. It is intended that in future the Learning and Teaching Group and programme managers will have oversight of staff development in the context of specified targets for quality enhancement. The team concludes that it is desirable for the College to engage now in more systematic analysis of staff development needs.

2.14 New staff are given a rigorous and effective induction incorporating a three-day residential course, organised by the Kaplan Tutor Academy. They are allocated a mentor and observe other staff teaching. Staff report that the induction process is thorough and makes a significant impact on their teaching. The team concludes that the induction of new staff is thorough and effective, including the three-day residential conference within the Kaplan organisation, and constitutes good practice.

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

2.15 The College is responsible for the provision of all learning resources required for its programmes. The Head of College and the Dean manage the learning resources budget. The College has produced a learning resources policy which constitutes a statement of intent, but at present there is no clear policy or system for ensuring the accessibility and sufficiency of learning resources. As indicated in paragraph 2.8, it is desirable to incorporate a review of learning resources in the process of annual review.

2.16 Students have a variety of means by which they can make their views on learning resources known, including the Staff Student Liaison Committee, the Student Council and the mid-term and end-of-term surveys. Students indicate that they are generally satisfied with the resources. Their views are taken into account at all levels within the College, but there is no formal evaluation of the quality and accessibility of learning resources on an annual basis.

2.17 Although still in its infancy, the virtual learning environment is popular with students and staff. The College has plans to engage with it more fully in the future. Currently, the virtual learning environment is largely a repository for information, but a key aim is to make its use more interactive and to evaluate the potential for uploading coursework and e-marking. The Academic Manager is involved with a Kaplan-wide project on e-marking.

The virtual learning environment is at an early stage of development as a learning tool. The team concludes that it is desirable for the College to continue with its development and encourage its use by staff and students.

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 main sources of information for prospective students and other stakeholders are the College website and information conveyed through agents abroad. The College works effectively with agents in keeping them up to date on developments through newsletters and visits from College staff. An electronic joining pack is sent to students prior to arrival. Home and international students are satisfied that they receive accurate information prior to joining the College and that information is consistent with the experience once enrolled. The website contains information useful for both current and prospective students.

3.2 In addition to its potential role as a learning tool, the virtual learning environment is an important vehicle for public information. Currently, students are able to access programme handbooks, module planners/guides, module descriptors and schemes of work. Other social media are also accessed by both prospective and current students. A key document on the College website is the College Student Handbook, which is comprehensive, attractive and professionally produced. It includes information on services, resources and student responsibilities.

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

3.3 The College has a thorough system of procedures and checks for the development and maintenance of accurate public information. The responsibility for the virtual learning environment is shared between the Academic Manager and Quality Manager. The Head of Admissions and Head of Marketing are responsible for signing off web-based and other marketing material at College level. The Head of College shares relevant materials with the validating bodies for approval of both the accuracy of information and branding. As nearly all of the College's public information is electronic, this allows for an efficient updating of materials and the ability to share this information easily with all stakeholders.

3.4 One means of obtaining feedback from students on information published through the virtual learning environment has been through the mid-term and end-of-term surveys. Augmenting the surveys to allow students to make qualitative comments about the virtual learning environment would provide additional information on its content and use.

3.5 It is intended that all email correspondence with students will be monitored by software. This will be operational shortly. It will be stored by the information technology department as a protection for all parties against unlawful or inappropriate communications and as a record of individual and mass mail content. The College recognises the need to make use of established media tools to communicate with students. The marketing department is responsible for monitoring social network usage and the accuracy of student-

to-student postings. The College makes productive use of the student postings by reacting to student complaints and any issues that may arise. These matters are swiftly brought to the attention of the Head of College. Accessibility to printed and online materials for students with disabilities will be a responsibility of the newly appointed Well-being Officer.

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 plan<sup>3</sup>

Holborn College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight June 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a significant body of staff scholarship and professional activity underpins academic standards and teaching and learning (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.12)</li> </ul>	Set defined targets for membership of The Higher Education Academy  Set defined targets for attending conferences  Devise mechanism for legal updates/ business updates	August 2013	Associate Dean  Associate Dean  Learning and Teaching Group	Percentage of staff having gained membership  Percentage of staff attending conferences  Introduction of new forums	Faculty Board/Learning and Teaching Group	Staff surveys  Feedback to Learning and Teaching Group for action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the monitoring, analysis and outcomes of student surveys enhance the quality of teaching (paragraph 2.6)</li> </ul>	Develop alternative ways to capture student feedback, for example student panels and discussions groups  Ask students	August 2013	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager  Learning and	A series of evidence-based teaching quality initiatives	Faculty Board	Assessment of new learning developments  Improvement in attendance, retention and student

<sup>3</sup> 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>specifically about different elements of their course and teaching experience, to be fed into instructional design and the learning and teaching strategy</p> <p>Link student feedback to student performance</p> <p>Feedback mechanisms to advise students of the action taken as a result of surveys</p>		<p>Teaching Group</p> <p>Learning and Teaching Group</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager</p>			satisfaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the induction of new teaching staff is thorough and effective (paragraph 2.14).</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback mechanism to capture experience of staff on induction programme</p> <p>Tutor health check to monitor the effectiveness of the induction programme after one or two semesters</p> <p>Enhance integration with Kaplan business units</p>	August 2013	Programme managers	<p>Feedback from staff</p> <p>Increased retention of staff after 12 months</p>	Senior Management Team	Programme managers to collect statistics and report to the Associate Dean

<b>Advisable</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>advisable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employ data analysis more extensively and effectively in the process of annual monitoring (paragraphs 1.9 and 2.11).</li> </ul>	<p>Provide enhanced information on cohort performance, including progression and attainment</p> <p>Data to be analysed following each examination board and fed into the annual monitoring process</p> <p>Enhance the understanding of the link between student success and student behaviour</p>	September 2013	Academic manager/ Programme managers	Evidence of a clear link between academic achievement and performance data	Faculty Board	Pass rates and average module marks
<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 provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>give full consideration to the new Quality Code in staff development (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.2)</li> </ul>	Consideration to be given to the new Quality Code by the Learning and Teaching Group and remapping exercise	December 2012	Learning and Teaching Group	Improved academic processes in key areas, such as module development,	Senior Management Team  Faculty Board	Regular review of mapping exercise and evidence of gap closure

	<p>to be carried out to demonstrate alignment to the new Quality Code</p> <p>Develop strategies/processes where the College does not meet expectations</p> <p>Staff development sessions to be carried out by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager</p>	<p>August 2013</p> <p>December 2013</p>	<p>Senior Management Team</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager</p>	assessment and student feedback		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implement and evaluate the new teaching and learning strategy (paragraph 2.4)</li> </ul>	<p>Complete the consultation process to finalise the learning and teaching strategy</p> <p>Publish to all stakeholders</p> <p>Embed into institutional practices and procedures</p>	<p>October 2012</p> <p>October 2012</p> <p>2013-14 academic year</p>	<p>Associate Dean</p> <p>Learning and Teaching Group</p>	<p>Level of feedback from stakeholders</p> <p>Evidence of implementation of new strategy</p>	Faculty Board	Level of staff engagement in the process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consider student services and learning resources in the College annual review (paragraphs 2.8, 2.15 and 2.16)</li> </ul>	<p>Consider student feedback process for student services and the library</p> <p>Results of student</p>	<p>August 2013</p>	<p>Heads of department</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Enhancement</p>	<p>Evidence of survey results and student feedback</p>	<p>Faculty Board</p> <p>Senior Management Team</p>	<p>Evidence of improvement in student services and library services</p>



	feedback and information gained from Staff Student Liaison Committee to be fed into the institutional annual review		Manager			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage in more systematic analysis of staff development needs (paragraph 2.13)</li> </ul>	Foster a culture of continuous development for all staff by an analysis of staff development needs in the appraisal process and implementing personal development planning	February 2013	Programme managers Associate Dean Heads of department	All staff to have produced personal development plans	Senior Management Team	Audit of levels of personal development planning, feeding into enhanced take-up of staff development opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to develop the virtual learning environment (paragraph 2.17).</li> </ul>	Review the strategic plan for the virtual learning environment in light of new university partners and academic developments	Mid-October 2012	Learning and Teaching Group	Production of an agreed final strategy	Senior Management Team	Senior Management Team to monitor that the strategy has been developed

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary). Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)<sup>4</sup>

**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:

---

<sup>4</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://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.

RG 991 09/12

**The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**

Southgate House  
Southgate Street  
Gloucester  
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000  
Fax 01452 557070  
Email [comms@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:comms@qaa.ac.uk)  
Web [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2012

ISBN 978 1 84979 647 7

All QAA's publications are available on our website [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786