



# **London College of Computing and Management Sciences**

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

July 2012

## Key findings about London College of Computing and Management Sciences

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in July 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **limited confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of ATHE and the Accrediting and Assessment Bureau for Post-Secondary Schools.

The team also considers that there can be **limited 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 organisations.

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 no items of **good practice**.

### Recommendations

The review team has identified a number of recommendations for consideration by the London College of Computing and Management Sciences.

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

- ensure that a fully integrated quality assurance framework is implemented (paragraph 1.3)
- ensure full compliance with the accreditation requirements of ATHE (paragraph 1.5).

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

- systematically record minutes and actions of all management meetings (paragraph 1.4).

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

- review the role of a Quality Assurance Manager (paragraph 1.2)
- engage more fully with the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*) (paragraph 1.7)
- identify good practice and areas for development resulting from teaching observations (paragraph 2.5)
- consistently complete and review student academic progress reports (paragraph 2.6)
- provide students with fuller information and guidance about plagiarism (paragraph 2.7)
- progress its plans for the development of an e-portal (paragraph 3.5).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)<sup>1</sup> (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the London College of Computing and Management Sciences (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 the Accrediting and Assessment Bureau for Post-Secondary Schools (AABPS) and ATHE. The review was carried out by Professor Charles Chatterjee, Dr Colin Fryer, Professor Donald Pennington (reviewers), and Dr Heather Barrett-Mold (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 documentation supplied by the College and meetings with staff and students, and a phone meeting with ATHE.

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

- Academic Infrastructure
- Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
- Guidance from AABPS
- Guidance from ATHE.

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

London College of Computing and Management Sciences (the College) is a private limited company incorporated in 2004, with the current proprietor acquiring the College in April 2008. Since that time the College has moved from its previous location in Forest Gate, London, to the current premises in Stratford, London, in 2010. The College aims to be one of quality education enhancing the opportunities for education, primarily for international students to improve their professional qualification or prepare for progression in the UK education system. The College is a small organisation currently employing fewer than 10 full-time equivalent staff.

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

### **Accrediting and Assessment Bureau for Post-Secondary Schools (AABPS)**

- Diploma in Business Management Level 4
- Diploma in Business Management Level 5
- Diploma in Business Management Level 6

### **ATHE**

- Diploma in Strategic Management Level 7
- Diploma in Health Care Management Level 7

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<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).

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

For all awards, the College is responsible for recruitment of students, learning and teaching, setting and marking assessments in accordance with the awarding organisations' approval, student support, and learning resources. There is a shared responsibility for public information. All subject learning outcomes are provided by the respective awarding organisations.

## **Recent developments**

In April 2011, the College had a considerable cut in its student numbers, which led to an immediate decision to proportionately reduce campus size and staff levels. This led to uncertainty about the future of the College. In March 2012, the College was awarded Highly Trusted Sponsor status by the UK Border Agency.

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

Although students have not submitted a student submission to the QAA, the College made a request for student feedback and evaluation of all aspects of the College provision. Students were present at the preparatory meeting. They were provided with guidelines for a student submission and given two questionnaires: perception of academic issues and perception of administration. These were received and analysed by College managers and this analysis was provided to the review team. The team would like to thank students for their contribution to the review.

## Detailed findings about London College of Computing and Management Sciences

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College's management structure reflects its small size, with staff having multiple roles within the organisation and informal arrangements being of particular importance. The Principal is responsible for strategic development and the maintenance of quality and standards and the Course Coordinator is responsible for academic standards at the programme level. Overall responsibility for the monitoring and review of academic standards resides with the College Quality Team, which is headed by the Principal and includes the Course Coordinator and a recently appointed Quality Assurance Manager. The Quality Team has only recently been established with only one meeting by the time of the visit. The relative powers and reporting lines of the Quality Team are not defined by terms of reference or clear responsibilities for standards and quality. All programmes are managed by the Course Coordinator who is supported by a full-time assistant. The Course Coordinator reports directly to the College Principal.

1.2 The College's structure for the management of academic standards is in development and would be significantly strengthened by increased emphasis on the role of a Quality Assurance Manager. The Quality Assurance Manager is currently undertaking a review of the management of academic standards. Emerging outcomes include the development of an annual monitoring report template and the establishment of a Quality Assurance Committee. It is desirable that the College reviews the role of a Quality Assurance Manager.

1.3 There is a lack of formal accountability within the oversight of academic standards. The College Quality Assurance Manual lacks detail and makes reference to quality systems not in operation at the time of the visit. The reporting structure illustrated in the College Quality Assurance Manual is not yet fully embedded. The College has no overall formal and systematic approach to quality assurance at an institutional level. Some useful information is collected, but it is not used at an overall programme or institutional level to assure standards or to put in place quality improvements. It is essential for the College to ensure that a fully integrated quality assurance framework is implemented.

1.4 Typically, minutes of meetings tend to be brief, lack clear and allocated actions, and don't have target completion dates. Senior management meetings are informal and lack focus. While the academic staff meetings are an important forum for sharing ideas, discussing priorities and promoting reflective practice, the team saw little evidence of a systematic approach to the monitoring and review of academic standards. Improving the quality of the minutes of meetings would demonstrate explicitly how the College manages the maintenance of academic standards, and provide formal assurance that action was taken in response to decisions made. It is advisable that the College systematically records minutes and actions of all management meetings.

1.5 The College failed to meet the requirement of ATHE in that from January 2012 all centre-devised assignments for QCF units must be approved by the awarding organisation. While the College is aware of its responsibilities in the management of academic standards as set out in the awarding organisation's accreditation handbook, its management oversight of the assessment requirements has not been effective; with current students having completed courses for a qualification where the centre-devised assignments had not been

agreed with the awarding organisation. For the awards offered in partnership with AABPS, the assignments developed by the College were approved by the awarding organisation as part of the centre approval process in January 2012. It is essential that the College ensures full compliance with the accreditation requirements of ATHE.

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

1.6 The College's academic provision is offered under partnership arrangements with its awarding organisations, which are responsible for ensuring that their processes and procedures take into account the key external reference points, including the QCF. Staff use the unit specifications provided by the awarding organisations. Students register with their appropriate awarding organisation and access programme specifications, learning outcomes and course information through the awarding organisations' websites. College staff reinforce the use of learning outcomes with students in teaching sessions, and regularly direct students to the awarding organisations' information.

1.7 While College staff are aware of some elements of the Academic Infrastructure, there is little evidence that the precepts of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*) are embedded in policies or practice, or that staff fully understand the expectations. College quality systems have yet to be explicitly mapped against the relevant sections of the *Code of practice*. The College needs to raise awareness among teaching staff of the importance of the Academic Infrastructure (in future the UK Quality Code for Higher Education) in the delivery of higher education. It is desirable that the College engages more fully with the *Code of practice*.

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

1.8 The College has external verifiers to review academic standards on all courses, and is primarily dependent on the accreditation process and monitoring reports of its awarding organisations. As a condition for accreditation, the College is required to put in place procedures and control mechanisms covering those aspects of quality and standards for which they are responsible, for example internal verification processes. The approval process enables the awarding organisations, in partnership with the College, to develop, maintain and improve the quality and delivery of the awarding organisations' qualifications.

1.9 The College has been offering its current higher education courses since September 2010 and in 2011 received two external verifiers' reports, both from ATHE. Concerns raised by the external verifier regarding the formal recording of internal verification sampling and decisions have been responded to by the College through the introduction of a centre-devised form. Points of development regarding organisation of assessment to be reviewed at future visits have been addressed. The external verifiers' reports are routinely considered at meetings arranged by the Course Coordinator and attended by teaching staff. While minutes of the meetings are recorded, the resulting actions and the lead responsibility for progressing these are not systematically captured (see paragraph 1.4).

1.10 There are no coherent and embedded procedures for review activities at an institutional level. The College has not yet undertaken any annual monitoring and review of its ATHE level 7 diploma, even though this has completed its first quality cycle. This does not accord with the requirements set out in the College Quality Assurance Manual. AABPS awards delivered by the College have not completed a full academic year and external verification has yet to occur. While there is evidence that the College engages with student and external verifier's feedback, there is little evidence of the component parts working

cohesively in practice. The Quality Assurance Manual does not specify policies for internal verification of assignments. Insufficient use is made of a wide range of evidence, for example the ATHE external verifier's report, which benchmarks achievement against the sector and student performance in individual modules (see paragraph 1.3).

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

## 2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The College is responsible for a range of aspects concerned with the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities. This includes admissions, annual monitoring, teaching and learning, student support and learning resources. Elements of a quality assurance framework are in place, such as feedback from students, but the College only has informal processes in place to oversee and monitor its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities (see paragraph 1.3). The Course Coordinator has the responsibility for ensuring that the teaching environment and quality of teaching is enhanced.

2.2 Students report the admissions process as positive and the induction period helpful. The College has an admissions procedure which details the different stages in the admissions process and which is regularly reviewed to ensure full compliance with the requirements of the UK Border Agency. The Admissions Policy provides guidance about admissions of overseas students and about the standard of English required to study on the programmes offered by the College. All students complete an admissions form. The College prospectus provides admissions requirements for each programme. The admissions process is followed by a five-day induction programme based around the Welcome Pack. Induction includes other information, such as timetable arrangements.

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

2.3 The College's use of external reference points is described in paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7. However, the *Code of practice* has particular relevance for the quality of learning opportunities and its use would underpin the development of a formal framework for quality assurance (see paragraph 1.3).

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

2.4 Students are appreciative of the quality of the teaching. Oversight of teaching quality and its enhancement is the responsibility of the Principal and the Course Coordinator. The Principal has overall responsibility for the appointment of teaching staff. The College ensures that teaching staff are appropriately qualified to teach higher education provision by appointing staff with the appropriate level and type of qualification and by support through induction and teacher training.

2.5 The College does not have a mechanism for gathering the collective outcomes of teaching observations to enable an overview of strengths and areas for development, and to

inform staff development needs. However, an objective of the College is to effectively support teaching and learning. The Course Coordinator and the Assistant Course Coordinator observe classroom teaching on a regular basis to monitor the quality of teaching and identify enhancements. Usually, teaching staff are briefed in advance about a planned observation and debriefed following the session using specific documentation. Actions identified through this process are not reviewed for completion through a review process and within a formal quality assurance framework. The College is considering making this a more formal process (see paragraph 1.3). It is desirable that the College identifies good practice and areas for development resulting from teaching observations.

2.6 The Student Academic Progress Report has been useful where used, but has not been fully implemented for all students. The Course Coordinator has responsibility for monitoring student progression on programmes taught at the College and for supporting students with progression to a university with which it has an agreement and other universities. The Course Coordinator completes a Student Academic Progress Report for each student; this is then discussed with the lecturer and the student. It is desirable for the College to consistently complete and review student academic progress reports.

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

2.7 Students find the induction process valuable. The Welcome Pack is used as part of the student induction process, in which students are given other information about their course and about living in the UK. The Student Handbook provides information on teaching, assessment, plagiarism and referencing, which is sound but, in parts, basic; for example, some guidance is given about plagiarism and students use anti-plagiarism software when submitting assessments. However, the information about plagiarism is introductory and students would find it helpful to have fuller guidance. It is desirable that the College provides students with fuller information and guidance about plagiarism.

2.8 Student feedback is gained in a variety of ways, both formal and informal. Students complete a Student Feedback Form each semester. Informal feedback is obtained by lecturers at the end of classes and the Course Coordinator when students have issues to raise. This feedback is not used effectively to gain an overview of student views that could inform a quality assurance framework. This contributes to the team's concerns that there is a need for a formal quality assurance framework (see paragraph 1.3).

2.9 Academic support for students is provided by the lecturing staff who help students with material covered in teaching sessions. Currently, students are not able to access teaching materials or assignments remotely. The College has identified the need to provide an e-learning portal to provide learning support and enable electronic submission of assignments. The College has started to develop this facility (see paragraph 3.6).

Students report high levels of satisfaction with both the academic support that they get from their lecturers and the pastoral support from the Student Welfare Officer. There is a Student Welfare Officer, who also has the role of Director of Marketing, and an Assistant Student Welfare Officer, who also has the role of Admissions Officer. The Student Welfare Officer is highly experienced and is understanding of student concerns. The 2008 report by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges applauded the College on its practical and pastoral support for students.

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

2.10 Staff development needs are identified on an individual basis, but are not collected at an institutional level. The College has a staff development policy which states that it

is committed to continual professional development for its entire staff. For example, the College supports staff to engage in the Edexcel Diploma in Teaching in Lifelong Learning Sector programme. At present, a number of teaching staff are enrolled on this Diploma. The College ensures that lecturing staff are aware of the importance of staff development for maintaining high standards of teaching and learning.

### **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 Students can access learning materials from the awarding organisations' websites and use past assessment papers. They feel that the College library, together with local libraries, provide them with the support they need. The College provides students with access to both printed and electronic resources, together with printing and technical support for student learning. The College library has essential texts, as well as information on essays and dissertations, study space and internet access. It is open five days a week between 8.30 and 17.00. Students can become members of any of the public libraries in the borough of Newham and the College helps students with gaining membership. Some students have joined the British Library.

2.12 The College provides an information technology laboratory and high-speed wireless internet connection for students to use on their laptops. There are specialist information technology staff who support students with technical issues. The College induction week for new students includes guidance on how to use the information technology provided by the College. The College contracts in technical experts to provide information technology support to students and staff and this works well.

2.13 A recent student questionnaire, in which students were asked about their satisfaction with facilities such as the library and information technology, shows high levels of satisfaction with the learning support arrangements provided by the College. Students expressed high levels of satisfaction with the learning resources provided to support their studies.

The review team has **limited confidence** that the College 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 Students commented favourably on the accuracy and usefulness of the information provided before their enrolment and while on course. The College's main channels for publishing information are its website, prospectus, Student Handbook, induction to new students, agents, and recommendations of former students of the College. The latter is of considerable importance in terms of the proportion of students recruited. The website includes information on the College, its mission, facilities, and courses. Available through the website is the Agents Briefing Pack, which clearly establishes the courses available, the fee structure and admissions requirements. There is also a Code of Ethics for Agents, which sets out expectations that the College has for its agents. There is a Pre-Arrival Pack for international students, which gives advice regarding a range of immigration issues, including

visas, as well as a useful checklist to use immediately prior to departure and information about living in London. The website is easy to navigate with a search facility and information that is clearly stated. Links are provided to the awarding organisations' websites where additional information on courses is available.

3.2 On arrival, students receive a Student Handbook and Welcome Pack, which provide them with information about the College and its resources. The Student Handbook and Welcome Pack provide useful information about College rules and regulations, a summary of the complaints procedure and information about immigration. Students find these documents valuable and helpful. The handbooks also give the students information on the qualifications of teaching staff, plagiarism and referencing, the importance of attendance and health and safety.

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

3.3 The College's understanding of what should be considered public information is clear. The arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of its information are almost exclusively performed by the Principal with support from other senior managers. Public information is considered by the College to be an important component of the business and as such the Principal maintains responsibility for this area. Information for publication is provided by the staff and passed to the Principal, who prioritises it, checks its accuracy and authenticity, and subsequently publishes it through the College's website. The website is the principal area for information and the source from which other documents are derived. Currently, students' views of public information are not used to inform future iterations (see paragraph 2.8).

3.4 Course details in the College prospectus (2011-12) lack some detail. The prospectus gives information about living in the UK and specifically in London. It sets out course information in terms of headlines giving module titles, but lacks details such as the assessment procedures, the qualifying criteria and the syllabus. These details are available through the websites of the College and its awarding organisations.

3.5 At present, there is no virtual learning environment and students are dependent on the website and hard copy of materials. As a result, they are not able to easily get updates of some materials and are not able to access remotely information which is not held on the website. The College plans to introduce an e-portal which will further enhance the flow of information, and has started to develop this facility. It is desirable that the College progresses its plans for the development of an e-portal.

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>

London College of Computing and Management Sciences action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight July 2012						
Essential	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is <b>essential</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that a fully integrated quality assurance framework is implemented (paragraph 1.3)</li> </ul>	<p>Quality Assurance Manager to develop Quality Assurance Framework in reference to the <i>Code of practice</i> and its appropriate application across the College</p> <p>Actions by Quality Assurance Manager to put in place Quality Assurance Framework - draft Quality Assurance Framework proposal by 14 November 2012, followed by input from all staff and awarding organisations by 30 November 2012 and final draft to presented by</p>	31/12/2012	Quality Assurance Manager	<p>Approval of Quality Assurance Framework by the College Quality Team and training and implementation across College by 31 January 2013</p> <p>Minutes of staff and management meetings/ constructive feedback from awarding organisations as to their extent of involvement in the College's Quality Assurance Framework and recommendations to satisfy their requirements from</p>	Principal	<p>College annual self-evaluation report</p> <p>College annual monitoring report</p>

<sup>3</sup>The provider has been required to develop this action plan to address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the provider's awarding organisations.

	<p>31 December 2012 for implementation by 31 January 2013</p> <p>Review current staff roles and adapt to conform to the Quality Assurance Framework</p> <p>Training of staff re: the <i>Code of practice</i></p> <p>Training of all staff to emphasise the importance of considering the quality of academic standards/learning opportunities and accuracy and relevance of public information provided by all staff at the College at all times</p> <p>Adhering to informed procedures for communicating</p>	<p>30/11/2012</p> <p>Training: Start date 16/11/2012</p> <p>End date 7/01/2012</p>	<p>Senior Management</p> <p>Quality Assurance Manager</p>	<p>the College as an approved centre delivering their qualifications</p> <p>Finalised report of Quality Assurance Framework and agreement of staff and awarding organisations</p> <p>Increased formal interaction recorded by staff and improved College performance on all three quality assurance elements</p> <p>Increase in student voice representation in feedback forms and records of meetings with students on student meeting form</p>	<p>Principal</p> <p>Principal</p>	<p>College annual self-evaluation report</p> <p>Minutes of meetings/staff training records/ quarterly written student feedback obtained from questionnaires and the analysis of same, all to inform the annual self-evaluation report</p>
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	formally any ideas, feedback, concerns and so on without hesitation and promptly, using intranet, staff meetings, peer observation meetings and student meetings  Regular monitoring of student academic performances					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure full compliance with the accreditation requirements of ATHE (paragraph 1.5).</li> </ul>	Liaise with ATHE and request full cooperation in conforming to updated accreditation requirements	30/11/2012	Course Coordinator	Acknowledgement from ATHE of full compliance to accreditation standards	Principal	Annual monitoring report  External examiner reports
<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>systematically record minutes and actions of all management meetings (paragraph 1.4).</li> </ul>	A more formal way of communication is encouraged between departments by way of training for use of College intranet facility without exception	31/10/2012	All staff	Minimum 80% improvement in recorded communication and detailed minutes	Quality Assurance Manager	Biannual audit of all minutes of meetings  Evaluation of actions set out in these meetings and percentage achievement of such actions

<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>review the role of a Quality Assurance Manager (paragraph 1.2)</li> </ul>	To define exactly the role of the Quality Assurance Manager by way of job description and expected achievements by next self-evaluation report	31/10/2012	Senior Management	Clear and precise job description of Quality Assurance Manager and role within the College and its Quality Assurance Framework	Principal	College annual monitoring report and self-evaluation  Annual Review of Educational Oversight by the Quality Assurance Agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage more fully with the <i>Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education</i> (the <i>Code of practice</i>) (paragraph 1.7)</li> </ul>	Staff training/ meetings  The <i>Code of practice</i> to inform policies and procedures of College	Monthly  31/12/2012	Quality Assurance Manager  College Quality Team	All staff fully trained by 31 January 2013 on the <i>Code of practice</i>  Revised policies and procedures integrating appropriate elements of the the <i>Code of practice</i>	Principal  Principal	Records of training minutes  College annual monitoring report and Review of Educational Oversight by the Quality Assurance Agency  Students feedback (from questionnaires)

						and meetings) as well as staff feedback in meetings and internal communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify good practice and areas for development resulting from teaching observations (paragraph 2.5)</li> </ul>	<p>Peer observation policy prepared dated 30 August 2012</p> <p>Increased peer observations and analysis of same</p> <p>Good practice and areas for development highlighted and to be informed to all academic staff</p>	31/12/2012	Course Coordinator	Highlighted areas identified and informed to all staff at academic staff meetings	Quality Assurance Manager	<p>Audit of peer observation records and feedback given to staff</p> <p>Record of academic staff meetings</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consistently complete and review student academic progress reports (paragraph 2.6)</li> </ul>	Next academic progress report is due in December 2012 and to be completed for all students	31/12/2012	Course Coordinator	All students have had an academic progress report completed by end of next semester	Principal	Evaluative analysis to be performed on academic progress reports by Course Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide students with fuller information and guidance about plagiarism (paragraph 2.7)</li> </ul>	<p>Induction week starting from 3 September 2012</p> <p>Students to be provided with detailed plagiarism policies along with all the</p>	30/09/2012	Course Coordinator	Fully improved plagiarism policy provided to all students as part of induction programme	Principal	Student feedback

	relevant information concerning their course					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>progress its plans for the development of an e-portal (paragraph 3.5).</li> </ul>	Student e-portal to be trialled for one subject area by 31 January 2013	31/01/2013	Course coordinator	All staff and students involved in trial subject area fully trained and confident in operating student e-portal by 30 April 2013	Principal	Feedback will be sought from staff/students involved in trials and e-portal

## 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:

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<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 1042 10/12

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© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2012

ISBN 978 1 84979 712 2

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Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786