Brit College

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

October 2012

Key findings about Brit College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in October 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the University of London, Edexcel, Association of Business Executives, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, British Computer Society, Institute of Administrative Management, and The Organisation for Tourism and Hospitality Management.

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 the awarding body and 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 the following **good practice**:

- effective use of Short Message Service (paragraph 3.3).

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:

- implement a formal quality framework that clearly defines responsibilities and accountabilities (paragraphs 1.3, 1.10, 2.2, and 2.8)
- review and monitor its quality assurance policies in a systematic way and map them against the *Code of practice* (paragraphs 1.4, 1.10, 2.2, and 3.4)
- develop a formalised approach to ascertaining the entitlement and support needs of students (paragraph 2.9)
- develop and implement mechanisms, within the Communication Policy, that manage and monitor effectively the publication of information (paragraph 3.4).

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

- clarify responsibilities, within the checklists, for determining assessment criteria and providing assignment briefs (paragraph 1.2)
- implement and monitor the system of teaching observation and appraisal for each member of staff (paragraph 2.6)
- develop further the arrangements for improving the response rate from student feedback mechanisms (paragraph 2.7)
- develop more formal processes for recording staff development activities and sharing good practice (paragraph 2.12)
- formalise the approach to resource development and monitoring (paragraph 2.13)
- embed the use of the virtual learning environment in its teaching and learning strategy and monitor its effectiveness (paragraph 2.14).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](link)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](link) at Brit 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 the University of London, Edexcel, Association of Business Executives, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, British Computer Society, Institute of Administrative Management, and The Organisation for Tourism and Hospitality Management. The review was carried out by Dr Sumesh Dadwal, Dr Brian Giddings, Ms Daphne Rowlands, (reviewers), and Mr Michael Ridout (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the *[Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](link)*.[2] Evidence in support of the review included the Quality Assurance Manual, policies and procedures, the programme specifications and an accreditation report by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges, supplied by the provider and its awarding organisations. Evidence was also gathered from meetings with staff and students, and from the scrutiny of samples of student work.

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

- the awarding body and organisation requirements
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*
- the Accreditation Service for International Colleges.

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

Brit College (the College) was established in June 2006 and is located in London on two campuses near Aldgate East underground station. The City Campus is situated on two floors of a building in Commercial Road and the Aldgate East Campus is situated nearby on one floor of a building in Greenfield Road. At the time of the review, the College was not recruiting new students; however, 547 continuing students were enrolled on courses from level 4 to level 7 in the areas of accountancy, business and management, information technology, law, and tourism and hospitality management. In 2009, the College was accredited by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges and received commendation for 'Premises and Health and Safety', 'Quality Assurance and Enhancement', 'Management and Staff Resources', and 'Student Welfare'.

The College's mission is to be an accredited UK college delivering high-quality and affordable higher education qualifications from leading UK-recognised awarding bodies and organisations. The College seeks to deliver excellent teaching and facilities for students, and to provide a supportive learning environment to enable students to achieve their educational objectives.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding body and organisations, with student numbers in brackets:

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4.
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

Association of Business Executives (ABE)
- Diploma in Business Management - level 6 (46)

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
- Foundations in Accountancy - level 4 (31)
- ACCA Professional Qualification - level 6 (79)

British Computer Society (BCS)
- Professional Graduate Diploma in Information Technology - level 6 (161)

Edexcel
- BTEC HND Business Management - level 5 (24)
- BTEC Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership - level 7 (22)

Institute of Administrative Management (IAM)
- Extended Diploma in Business and Administrative Management - level 6 (56)

University of London
- Bachelor of Law (LLB) - level 6 (45)
- Master of Laws (LLM) - level 7 (4)

The Organisation for Tourism and Hospitality Management (OTHM)
- Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality Management - level 4 (26)
- Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality Management - level 5 (30)
- Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality Management - level 6 (23)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College currently works with one awarding body (University of London) and five awarding organisations (ABE, ACCA, BCS, Edexcel, IAM and OTHM), which approve its higher education programmes. The awarding body and organisations determine the intended learning outcomes, indicative content and assessment guidelines for each programme. The College is responsible for learning, teaching and managing the quality and delivery of the programmes in accordance with the regulations of its awarding partners. In the case of Edexcel, the College designs, organises and verifies assessments internally before external verification by the awarding body. The College is a tuition provider for the University of London and ACCA. The University of London, ABE, ACCA, BCS, IAM and OTHM are responsible for the summative (external) assessment. In these cases, the College provides formative assessment to the students. The College is approved to offer courses on behalf of the NCFE and ATHE, although there are no students currently enrolled on these courses.

Recent developments

The College has undergone a period of unprecedented change that has involved relocating its various campuses. The recent relocation to the Aldgate East Campus, in close proximity to the City Campus, has been beneficial and plans are in place to develop a campus at Limehouse in 2013. The recently formed Academic Management Team, comprising the Principal, Director of Studies and Registry, acts both as an executive committee for the Academic Board and as the group for managing the College's academic affairs. This has allowed the Senior Management Team (comprising the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Student Welfare, and Director of Communications and Marketing) to focus on the management of the College's business and administrative activity.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. In order to achieve this, the College convened a student consultation meeting of course representatives. The representatives were asked their opinions on a set of questions relating to quality assurance and student learning environment at the College. The student responses were recorded on video and transcribed by College staff. The video file and transcript form the basis of the student submission and were made available to the review team. The College subsequently engaged a consultant to work with a wider range of students to ascertain their views. The outcomes of this activity were made available to the review team. Students who had contributed to the first of these activities were present at the preparatory meeting and a wider group of students at the student meeting during the review visit. The review team found the students to be very enthusiastic and their informative contributions made a helpful contribution to the review.

Detailed findings about Brit College

1   Academic standards

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

1.1   Academic standards are managed appropriately. The College has a mission statement which clearly sets out its aims and objectives. Staff are aware of the College's aims, which are published in the staff handbook.

1.2   The College has agreements with a number of awarding bodies and organisations. For some programmes, for example University of London and ACCA programmes, the College acts as a tuition centre, only preparing students for external examinations. A clear delineation of shared responsibilities is indicated in checklists for each programme. In some cases, the checklists contain ambiguity between responsibility for providing assessment criteria and responsibility for producing assessment vehicles. Each of the agreements is signed by the Principal on behalf of the Academic Board. It would aid clarity if the College differentiated, within its responsibility checklists, between responsibility for determining assessment criteria and responsibility for writing assignments. It is desirable for the College to clarify responsibilities, within the checklists, for determining assessment criteria and providing assignment briefs.

1.3   An organisation chart setting out the management structure for the College shows a separation of responsibility for the management of the College and academic management. The College Principal is responsible for academic leadership of the College and reports to the Academic Board. The remit of the newly formed Academic Management Team is to ensure the effective management and consistent implementation of quality assurance procedures. It meets regularly and its minutes demonstrate that it receives reports from team meetings. The Academic Board reports to the Board of Directors. There is no formal quality cycle or titular head of quality and standards. It would aid clarity if accountability and responsibility for quality and standards were clearly defined within the organisation. It is advisable for the College to implement a formal quality framework that clearly defines responsibilities and accountabilities.

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

1.4   External reference points are used satisfactorily. The College has a number of policies and agreed procedures that provide the basis for the management of academic standards and quality processes. The draft Admissions Policy sets out procedures for students' admission on to programmes and reflects the ethos of the relevant part of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*). The Academic Policy provides an overview of academic expectations of staff. The Academic Management Team regularly reviews the Quality Assurance Manual to ensure that it takes due note of the *Code of practice*. The Academic Management Team will refer any updates, additions or amendments to the Academic Board for approval. Policies are not currently developed fully and/or mapped to the *Code of practice*, although it is the intention of the College to do so in the future. It would facilitate and improve the management of standards and quality assurance if policies were more aligned and mapped against external reference points. It is advisable for the College to review and monitor its quality assurance policies in a systematic way and map them against the *Code of practice*.

1.5   The Director of Studies ensures course manuals include appropriate details and course coordinators disseminate information to their own course teams. Teaching plans and assignment briefs include reference to intended learning outcomes. Most teachers are practitioners within their own specialism and are members of professional bodies, which helps to ensure the currency of programme content.

1.6   The College complies with the qualification specifications and quality assurance requirements for the awards of the awarding bodies and organisations. These responsibilities are outlined in the individual agreements. A course manual is established for each course using the specifications and curriculum provided by the relevant awarding body or organisation in conjunction with the College's Quality Assurance Manual.

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

1.7   External moderation and verification are used to good effect. Responsibilities for each programme have been clearly defined, showing who has responsibility for such tasks as first marking of assignments, setting assessments and moderation of assignments. Where the College conducts examinations on behalf of an awarding body or organisation, it does so in accordance with the regulations and requirements of its awarding partner. External assessment and moderation of assignments are undertaken by the relevant awarding body or organisation, following internal verification by the College.

1.8   The College's internal verification procedures follow guidelines of the awarding bodies and organisations together with its own guidelines. The College has a sound internal verification system, which requires assessors to complete a form that is submitted to the Director of Studies. The internal verifier or second marker checks that appropriate criteria have been used and ensures marking standardisation. Written formative feedback is provided to students, once the assessment has been verified and assessment feedback forms demonstrate that this system is being implemented effectively.

1.9   External examiners and moderators liaise with the relevant course team for moderation visits. Reports following a visit are recorded by Registry that reports findings to the Academic Management Team, which tracks and monitors the overall progress of actions arising from external reports. Ultimately, reports are submitted to the Academic Board. External verifier reports for Edexcel courses confirm that the internal verification system is rigorous, that feedback is of a good standard, and that assignment briefs are consistent and of an appropriate standard.

1.10   The College has an effective relationship with its awarding body and organisations, particularly with the OTHM, which confirms the College as a preferred partner. The College's quality process, which is in draft form, outlines the way in which College management monitors its academic standards. However, not all processes in the policy are currently being implemented. For example, the receipt of annual course reports to Academic Board is undertaken in an informal manner, with course information collected through discussions between the Director of Studies and course coordinators. It would aid clarity if policies were updated and their use monitored. The College evaluates its own procedures in an appropriate way through the Academic Management Team, scrutinising courses objectively in terms of attendance, achievement, and progression and through the use of informal and formal course reviews.

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

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2   Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1   Learning opportunities are managed appropriately in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the awarding body and organisations, as described in paragraph 1.1. There are plans to include student representatives on the Academic Board.

2.2   A range of policies are used to assure quality, but mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of these policies are underdeveloped. Policies are consolidated into the Quality Assurance Manual, but are at different stages of development. There is no complete set of accurate up-to-date policies or system to measure their effectiveness in leading to quality improvement.

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

2.3   External reference points are used within course delivery to meet the needs of the awarding body and organisations, as stated in paragraph 1.2. The *Code of practice* is appropriately disseminated through course coordinators. As a result, module handbooks, schemes of work and teaching plans refer to learning objectives, assessment criteria, and awarding body and organisation requirements. Accreditation of prior learning is possible, but only when it has been agreed with the relevant awarding body or organisation.

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

2.4   Course organisation promotes effective learning. The general student handbook and course module handbooks are updated annually and include relevant information and details of assessment formats and methodologies, although some module handbooks contain more comprehensive information than others. Course coordinators monitor the teaching and learning content of teaching plans which identify learning objectives and specific measurable learning outcomes and assessment opportunities. A variety of teaching methods are used by some lecturers, but, in other cases, there is an over-reliance on limited teaching methods, for example some teaching plans focus heavily on lecture and discussion.

2.5   Assessment processes are well organised and include the provision of effective feedback. Assessment strategies include summative and formative activities and are incorporated into schemes of work that are communicated effectively to teaching staff and students. Student work is assessed and verified appropriately.

2.6   Class observations and appraisals are carried out for the improvement of teaching skills and course delivery, but are not widespread. Regular teaching observations by course coordinators and appraisals are scheduled. Records of observations include short positive and negative comments, but do not include lecturer comments or requirements for further actions. Appraisals focus on work-based competencies and assessment of performance to identify potential training needs. Some staff are appraised with actions identified to improve work skills, but there is no evidence of follow-up to ensure that actions are completed. It is desirable for the College to implement and monitor the system of teaching observation and appraisal for each member of staff.

2.7   The College responds to student feedback. There is a good overall level of student satisfaction, but surveys indicate a degree of dissatisfaction in some areas. For example, only 40 per cent of respondents thought their experiences at the College were good or better

than good, 41per cent found their experience satisfactory and 19 per cent were dissatisfied. There are low participation rates in student feedback activities. The proportion of students responding to a number of questions within the questionnaire is relatively low compared to the whole student body. Students have the opportunity to raise issues directly with staff. Their feedback is used to inform decisions regarding teaching and learning and resource allocation. It is desirable for the College to develop further the arrangements for improving response rates from student feedback mechanisms.

2.8   Management of courses is not informed sufficiently by the use of data. The annual review indicates that completion rates for all courses are low (17 to 47 per cent), but pass rates are high on most courses (80 to 100 per cent), with the exception of BCS (40 per cent) and Bachelor of Law (60 per cent). Attendance and student progress data is available on the intranet, but with little evidence of use in tracking and supporting students, or in course review. Course reviews cover a range of factors, such as student attendance, retention rates, pass rates and progression rates, but are carried out on an informal basis at course team level.

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

2.9   Academic support of students is informal and relies heavily on the professionalism of the teachers. The student body is mainly comprised of international students from a wide variety of backgrounds. The College does not actively seek to identify the special needs of students; however, once these become apparent, it provides appropriate support. Induction material and activities are used to acclimatise students to the UK. The College provides a good range of on-course enrichment activities, including sports events, visits, excursions and debates. Careers information and employability skills are partly integrated within the course delivery and partly provided on an informal basis. While generally effective, the College's informal approaches cannot assure that all students are provided with the support they need. It is advisable for the College to develop a formalised approach to ascertaining the entitlement and support needs of students.

2.10   The communication channels between the College and students are effective. The course manual contains the programme specifications and curriculum information needed by students and is used as a reference for administration and course management. The intranet is used to record attendance and progress marks, and to communicate with students. The recently introduced virtual learning environment is being developed to improve online communication and interaction between students and staff. It will also provide access to course materials. A newsletter is produced for students.

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

2.11   The College supports and encourages staff to develop knowledge and teaching skills to secure the currency of course delivery. Teaching staff are well qualified, enthusiastic and often use a variety of teaching methods. The College encourages staff to take a relevant teaching qualification and preference is given to candidates with teaching qualifications during recruitment. New staff receive suitable support to enable them to meet the needs of their role.

2.12   Staff have the opportunity to attend internal and external development activities. Staff development is monitored and reviewed annually by the Academic Management Team, but records of events attended are incomplete. Good practice is also shared informally, for example many teaching staff work in other institutions and suggest different working methods to enhance teaching. The College intends to implement the sharing of good practice as a standard agenda item for Academic Management Team meetings. It is

desirable for the College to develop more formal processes for recording staff development activities and sharing 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?

2.13   The College ensures adequate staffing to support student learning by employing full-time and part-time staff. There is a small library with key texts and an information technology laboratory. The College considers student and staff feedback when considering its information technology, staff, library and other resource needs. In their initial submission, students indicated that the resources are not adequate for their needs; however, in discussions during the visit, students and teaching staff expressed their satisfaction with the provision of library and information technology facilities. The College's approach to identifying resource needs is reactive and resource requirements are determined, monitored and reviewed informally. There is a need for a more formalised and systematic resource development plan. It is desirable for the College to formalise the approach to resource development and monitoring.

2.14   The College introduced its virtual learning environment in September 2012. The Director of Communications and Marketing, with the help of a manager, is responsible for its development. Students have expressed their interest in the virtual learning environment. However, its implementation is still at an early stage. It is not established fully and not effectively implemented college-wide for ensuring accessibility of online resources. It is desirable for the College to embed the use of the virtual learning environment in its teaching and learning strategy and monitor its effectiveness.

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.

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3   Public information

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

3.1   The College is responsible for offering accurate and timely academic, non-academic and marketing information to students and other stakeholders. Both paper and electronic methods are used to disseminate information. College policies are communicated to students and staff at inductions, through handbooks, Short Message Service (SMS) system and meetings. Students and staff are satisfied with the effectiveness of systems for the dissemination of public information at the College.

3.2   The College considers its website as the first point of contact for marketing to prospective students. Marketing materials provide appropriate information on entry requirements, courses offered and possibilities for progression available to students after completing their courses. At the time of the visit, updated marketing material was not available, as the College is not currently admitting new international students.

3.3   The College uses a number of effective channels of communication, including prospectus, handbooks, staff publications, marketing material, emails, the virtual learning environment, newsletters, the website, and SMS system. It is moving its focus more towards online virtual learning environment and SMS methods of communication. The College's SMS

system supports students with timely updates on policies, timetables, fees, assessments, attendance, progress and statistics online. Students appreciated this system for instant information. The effective use of SMS is good practice.

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

3.4   The College has acceptable arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information that it is responsible for publishing. Although there is a brief and generic Communication Policy, it is not fully developed, does not clearly specify accountabilities and responsibilities, is not implemented systematically or formally monitored. There are informal and less effective methods of revision and version control of the website and other documents. For instance, there are College policies that are still in draft version. The upkeep and updating of the website is managed internally by a number of staff and they report to the Director of Communications and Marketing. The effectiveness of this arrangement has not yet been evaluated. Staff indicated, during the visit, that the system does not formally monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the Communication Policy and version control of documents. The Communication Policy is not effectively referenced against the *Code of practice* or other reference points, and is informally implemented and monitored by the Senior Management Team. It is advisable for the College to develop and implement mechanisms, within the Communication Policy,
that manage and monitor effectively the publication of information.

3.5   The College has appropriate systems for the dissemination of academic and marketing related public information related to pre-admission, during study and post study, using paper and online methods. The Director of Studies, who reports to the Academic Board through the Academic Management Team, is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and effectiveness of academic information. Marketing and promotional materials are maintained and monitored by the Director of Marketing and Communications, and material is approved by senior management.

3.6   The College communicates appropriately with its students and staff about various policies and procedures and meetings, using formal and informal systems. Generally, students and staff are satisfied with information and communications at the College through different channels, including the SMS system.

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[3]

Brit College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight October 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:						
• effective use of Short Message Service (paragraph 3.3).	Maintain areas of good practice and identify areas for development and enhancement Consult with students and staff Review College use of Short Message Service in key areas Establish enhance monitoring and feedback procedures	Action plan and recommendations to Academic Board by May 2013 Implementation of action plan by June 2013 Enhanced monitoring and feedback procedures in place by June 2013	Director of Communications and Marketing Chief Executive and Senior Management Team Director of Communications and Marketing	Enhanced service in place for key areas Student welfare and support, attendance administration, timetabling, consultations and meetings Enhanced monitoring and feedback procedures in place Student satisfaction rates	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board Senior Management Team report Monitoring and feedback from Director of Marketing and Communications Student satisfaction survey results

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[3] The provider has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the provider's awarding body and organisations.

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
				for use of Short Message Service in key areas		
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:						
• implement a formal quality framework that clearly defines responsibilities and accountabilities (paragraphs 1.3, 1.10, 2.2 and 2.8)	Draft quality framework supported to Academic Board in April 2013 for Implementation by June 2013	Principal and Academic Management Team	Quality Framework agreed by Academic Board Quality Framework disseminated to Academic and administrative staff Academic and administrative staff familiar with and implementing responsibilities and accountabilities as set out in the Quality Framework Academic Management Team monitoring	Academic Board	Review of Quality Framework by Academic Board Staff consultation meetings; agendas and minutes Quality assurance monitoring and management reports and feedback to Academic Management Team Academic Management Team meeting minutes and reports to	

			and managing responsibilities and accountabilities established in the Quality Framework		Academic Board	
• review and monitor its quality assurance policies in a systematic way and map them against the *Code of practice* (paragraphs 1.4, 1.10, 2.2 and 3.4)	Review and update the College quality assurance policies	Updated policies to be agreed by Academic Board April 2013	Principal and Academic Management Team	All quality assurance policies, reviewed, up to date and operational	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board Academic Management Team report and minutes Policy review report and the Quality Code policy mapping
	Update Quality Assurance Manual and integrate with Quality Framework	Updated policies and Quality Assurance Manual operational by June 2013	Principal and Academic Management Team	Quality Assurance Manual up to date with all relevant policies, and disseminated to all appropriate staff		
	Update and map policies to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)	Policies mapped to the Quality Code by June 2013	Principal and Academic Management Team	Quality Assurance policies mapped against the Quality Code		
	Establish formal review and monitoring cycle for College policies as	Embedded policy review and monitoring procedures in	Principal and Academic Management Team	Policy review schedule established as part of the		

	part of the College's Quality Framework	place by June 2013		College's Quality Framework		
• develop a formalised approach to ascertaining the entitlement and support needs of students (paragraph 2.9)	Establish Student Support Entitlement working group	Working group established by March 2013	Chief Executive	Formal student support assessment and entitlement procedures established	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board
	Develop formal process to identify and establish student entitlements and support needs	Working group report to Academic Board by June 2013	Chief Executive			Student support monitoring and management report from senior management team
	Update Student Support & Learning Resources policy	Draft procedures updated, Student Support & Learning Resources policy submitted to Academic Board by June 2013		Updated student support and learning resources policy in place		
				Student support monitoring and management procedures in place		
• develop and implement mechanisms, within the Communication Policy, that manage and monitor effectively the publication of information (paragraph 3.4).	Update the College Public Information and Communications Policy	Updated Public Information and Communications Policy drafted and submitted for approval to Academic Board by March 2013	Director of Communications and Marketing	Updated Public Information and Communications Policy in place	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board
						Monitoring and audit reports for website, publications
	Establish formal procedures for effective monitoring	Formal monitoring and management	Chief Executive and Senior Management	Formal monitoring and management		Management review by Senior Management

	and management of communications and public information published by the College	procedures implemented by June 2013	Team	procedures established and implemented Public Information up to date, accurate, fit for purpose and reliable		Team Stakeholder feedback on College communications and public information
Desirable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **desirable** for the provider to:						
• clarify responsibilities, within, the checklists, for determining assessment criteria and providing assignment briefs (paragraph 1.2)	Consult with course coordinators and review responsibility checklists for each programme	Consultation and review of checklists completed by March 2013	Director of Studies and course coordinators	Responsibility checklists updated, assessment criteria and guidelines for assignment briefs in place for each course	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board Course reviews and monitoring data Course scheme of work and mapping of assessment criteria and assignment briefs against awarding body and organisation Programme Specification Academic
	Update checklists to clarify responsibility for determining assessment criteria and provision of assignment briefs	Updated checklists approved by Academic Management Team by May 2013	Director of Studies and Academic Management Team	Course coordinators and Director of Studies understand and implement individual responsibilities for determining assessment		

				criteria and providing assignment briefs		Management Team minutes and monitoring reports
	Ensure lecturers and tutors are aware of and complying with responsibilities as set out in checklists	Staff meetings to ensure academic staff are aware of their responsibilities held by June 2013	Director of Studies	Tutors and lecturers for each course understand and implement individual responsibilities for assessment criteria and assignment briefs		Minutes of Academic staff meetings and consultations
		Updated responsibility checklists submitted for approval to Academic Board by June 2013	Principal	Academic Management Team monitors and manages implementation of updated responsibility checklists		
• implement and monitor the system of teaching observation and appraisal for each member of staff (paragraph 2.6)	Schedule and implement teaching observations for all teaching staff	2013 Teaching Schedule to be implemented by April 2013	Director of Studies	Teaching observation records in place for all teaching staff	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board Academic Management Team minutes and monitoring reports
	Schedule and implement appraisals for all	2013 staff appraisal schedule to be	Director of Studies and Academic	Teaching staff receiving regular feedback on		

	staff	implemented by April 2013	Management Team	teaching approach		Teaching Observation reports
	Academic Management Team to review and monitor teaching observations to enhance teaching practice	Academic Management Team to begin monitoring and reviewing teaching practice by April 2013	Principal	Academic Management Team monitoring teaching practice as part of teaching and learning strategy		Staff Development strategy report Academic staff meeting minutes
	Academic Management Team to review and monitor staff appraisals for staff development needs	Updated Human Resources records in place by April 2013	Chief Executive	Teaching staff sharing good practice for teaching and learning		Course reviews and schemes of work Student feedback forms for teaching and learning quality
	Appraisals and teaching observations to be recorded as part of Human Resources records Student feedback on teaching and learning implemented for all courses	Student feedback pro forma available for all courses by February 2013	Registrar and Academic Management Team	Schemes of work and teaching approaches updated in light of monitoring and feedback Appraisals implemented for all staff and staff development needs identified Updated staff development strategy in place		Staff appraisal forms

				Student feedback on teaching and learning provided from all courses		
• develop further the arrangements for improving the response rate from student feedback mechanisms (paragraph 2.7)	Establish a working group to identify potential problems and suggest mechanisms to improve and enhance engagement and feedback Hold consultation meetings with students and staff Develop online and paper surveys to improve and promote consultation and feedback	Working group established by 31 January 2012 Consultation meetings held by April 2013 Questionnaires disseminated by February 2013 Consultation results analysed by March 2013 Working Group recommendations to Academic Board by 30 March 2013 Development plan established by May 2013	Director of Communications and Marketing and Senior Management Team	Enhanced feedback mechanisms in place for each course and service Enhanced consultation mechanisms in place for student feedback Enhanced monitoring system for student feedback in place Improved feedback and engagement rates achieved	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board Working group meeting minutes Consultation meeting minutes, questionnaires and analysis Student feedback action plan Feedback data and participation rates Feedback monitoring reports
• develop more formal processes for recording staff development	Implement formal staff development strategy	Staff development strategy in place by April 2013	Principal	Continuing professional development and staff	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board Staff continuing

| activities and sharing good practice (paragraph 2.12) | Establish formal process for recording staff development activities

Establish formal processes for staff development and sharing good practice

Implement schedule of academic staff development meetings | Staff development and continuing professional development record established for academic staff by April 2013 | Human Resources Manager | development needs identified in appraisals and teaching observations

Staff development and continuing professional development recorded for all academic staff

Staff development strategy implemented and monitored by Academic Management Team

Schedule of regular academic staff development sessions established to foster, develop and share good practice in teaching and learning | | professional development records

Staff handbook Academic Calendar

Academic Team meeting minutes

Academic staff development minutes

Student feedback on quality of teaching and learning

Staff appraisals and teaching observation reports

Course reviews and monitoring reports |

				Good practice identified and shared across academic staff		
				Quality of teaching and learning in College, enhanced by continuous professional development		
• formalise the approach to resource development and monitoring (paragraph 2.13)	Establish formal learning resource review procedure	Review of learning resource levels and priorities for each course implemented by March 2013	Director of Studies and course coordinators	Learning resource levels and priorities identified for each course	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board Course learning resource reviews Learning resource development strategy Learning resource monitoring reports Academic Management Team minutes and reviews Academic staff
	Establish College learning resource development strategy	Learning resource development strategy established by May 2013	Principal and Academic Management Team	Strategic learning resource development priorities identified		
	Establish formal learning resource monitoring system	Learning Resource monitoring system implemented by May 2013	Director of Studies and Director of Communications and Marketing	Learning resource usage and student satisfaction monitored to ensure appropriate		

				resource levels Learning resource levels and development reviewed by Academic Management Team		meeting minutes
						Student representative feedback reports
				Learning resource allocation issues identified and promptly addressed		Student satisfaction survey results
• embed the use of the virtual learning environment in its teaching and learning strategy and monitor its effectiveness (paragraph 2.14).	Develop course outlines and learning resources in virtual learning environment for each course	Virtual learning environment course outlines and learning materials implemented for all courses by April 2013	Director of Studies	Scheme of work embedded in virtual learning environment	Academic Board	Review by Academic Board
						Virtual learning environment course profiles, activities and forums
	Develop online resources in virtual learning environment to support teaching and learning strategy	Schemes of work for each course to include virtual learning environment provision by April 2013	Director of Studies	Virtual learning environment strategy established for each course		Academic Management Team minutes and reviews
						Course reviews
	Establish monitoring and feedback systems in virtual	Virtual learning environment monitoring and	Director of Communications and Marketing	Interactive learning and assessment		Virtual learning environment monitoring and usage data

	learning environment to monitor impact and effectiveness of virtual learning environment resources	feedback systems online by April 2013 Academic Management Team to review virtual learning environment teaching and learning strategy by May 2013	Principal	activities established for each course in virtual learning environment Student forums established for each course in virtual learning environment Lesson plans, teaching resources and staff forums established in virtual learning environment Teaching and learning surveys established for each course in virtual learning environment Virtual learning environment participation rates and usage targets established for each course		Student satisfaction survey results Student representatives feedback Academic staff meeting minutes Teaching and learning quality survey results

				Academic Management Team monitoring and reviewing feedback and virtual learning environment usage		

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: Handbook*[4]

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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[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.