



Outcomes from IQER: 2008-10

College management of higher education

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Preface

Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER) is defined in the current *Handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* as 'an evidence-based peer review of a college's management of the student learning experience and performance of its responsibilities for the academic standards and quality of its higher education provision'.¹

Each IQER Summative review report identifies good practice which has been noted by the review team during the process. In this context, good practice is defined as 'practice that the IQER team regards as making a particularly positive contribution to the college's management of the student learning experience of higher education in the context of that college; and which is worthy of wider dissemination within and/or beyond the college'. QAA is committed to disseminating the good practice identified in review reports, and the present series of *Outcomes from IQER* papers is one method by which this dissemination is achieved.

The papers take a thematic, evidence-based approach. The four papers in the series are:

- *College management of higher education*
- *Staff development*
- *Assessment*
- *The student voice.*

Each paper identifies broad themes, drawing particularly on the related good practice and recommendations in the individual IQER reports. Both good practice and recommendations quoted in these papers are cross-referenced to the individual reports so that interested readers may obtain more details if they wish. Good practice points are identified in the context of the college in question, and should be viewed in that light. Likewise, the recommendations often represent opportunities for enhancement rather than reflecting any major deficiencies in existing practice. The papers place the identified themes within the broader context of developments in the sector as a whole, and summarise the overall position across the sector in relation to the topic in question.

Outcomes from IQER papers are written primarily for policy makers and managers within the college community with immediate responsibility for and interests in quality assurance, although specific topics may be of interest to other groups of readers, in particular to staff in awarding bodies with responsibility for collaborative activity. While QAA retains copyright in the content of the *Outcomes* papers, they may be freely downloaded from QAA's website and cited with acknowledgement.

¹ For more information about IQER see www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/IQER-England.

Summary

This paper is based on a review of the outcomes of the 90 IQER Summative review reports published between 2008 and 2010. Taken together the reports draw attention to the wide variety of systems and practice in colleges offering higher education, dependent on the size and stage of development of the provision.

IQER reports highlight considerable development in management arrangements for colleges' higher education provision. However, it is also apparent that colleges are at different stages of development with regard to internal quality assurance processes, student representation and methods for disseminating good practice. Recommendations are, in the main, intended to encourage and enhance the management of higher education provision.

Colleges have established a variety of structures specifically to support the management of higher education. These arrangements include management responsibilities, and reporting and committee structures. The extent to which they are differentiated from those for further education usually depends on the size of the higher education provision. While colleges observe the quality assurance systems of their awarding bodies, many also operate their own supplementary quality systems in areas such as annual monitoring. Attention is drawn in the reports to strategic approaches to the management of colleges' higher education provision. There are also recommendations intended to enhance in general strategies and policies for managing higher education.

Three main areas of externality in quality assurance processes are drawn out in the reports: engagement with the Academic Infrastructure; relationships with external examiners and the use of their reports; and links with employers. Colleges were found to have generally engaged with the Academic Infrastructure and embedded it in their policies and processes. External examiner reports were used to enhance the quality of higher education programmes. A substantial number of reports contain features of good practice relating to the management of links with employers, particularly in relation to their contribution to curriculum development, and the effectiveness of work-based learning.

There is evidence of good practice in the involvement of students in quality assurance processes and of effective student representation. Several areas of good practice in relation to the collection and use of feedback from students, as well as recommendations for enhancing responsiveness to the student voice, can be found.

The IQER method includes a focus on enhancement. Areas of good practice and recommendations for enhancement of the management of higher education can be found in many of the reports. In particular, there are substantial numbers of comments about how good practice is identified and disseminated by the college, which is a key mechanism for quality enhancement.

It is clear from the reports that effective and efficient relationships with colleges' awarding bodies are crucial, and a large number of features of good practice are identified in the operation of partnerships, together with some recommendations for improving collaborative working. Several features of good practice are also identified in the area of link or liaison tutors and in the monitoring by awarding bodies of the information given to prospective students by partner institutions.

College management of higher education: context

1 This paper is based on a review of the outcomes of the 90 IQER Summative review reports published between 2008 and 2010 (a full list of the reports can be found at Annex D on page 47). The methodology used in analysing the reports for this and other *Outcomes* series is described in Annex C, page 46.

2 IQER was introduced as a review method for further education colleges across the whole sector in England, whether they were funded directly by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) or indirectly by partner higher education institutions. The method was designed to respond to the needs of colleges, and places an emphasis on enhancement. Previously, directly-funded colleges and some HEFCE-funded consortia were reviewed as part of academic, subject or Foundation Degree review.² While Audit of collaborative provision focuses on how the higher education institution manages its partnerships, IQER focuses on the management of quality by the college. Awarding bodies, which include higher education institutions and Edexcel, may also be involved in IQER reviews to provide information for review teams and support for their partner colleges.

3 The size, scale and level of higher education in colleges make a difference to the strategy, organisation and management of the provision. Colleges with large provision frequently differentiate the arrangements for their higher education from their further education. These colleges have systems developed specifically for higher education programmes, such as policies, procedures, and annual monitoring processes that are referenced to the Academic Infrastructure. Colleges with smaller provision are more likely to use their further education quality systems, making some adaptations where necessary. However large the provision, higher education is not the main business of the college. There are no common management structures for higher education across the sector, leading to substantial variety in roles, systems and arrangements. For the first time, HEFCE requested a higher education strategy from colleges to be submitted in January 2010.³ An analysis of a sample of those submitted is published on the HEFCE website.⁴

4 Colleges deliver higher education in partnership with awarding bodies. Most colleges have partnerships with higher education institutions. Of the 50 colleges that offer Higher National Diplomas and Certificates, most do so in a direct arrangement with Edexcel; others are provided through higher education institutions licensed by Edexcel. A good working relationship with higher education institutions is central to an effective partnership. Past QAA reviews, of Foundation Degrees in particular, have identified strong collaboration between awarding bodies and their partner colleges as crucial.⁵ However, changes to funding arrangements in England are having an impact on partnership arrangements, and it is not always possible for colleges to achieve security of funding for three years, as recommended by the HEFCE consultation in 2006.⁶

² *Overview report on Foundation Degree reviews conducted in 2003*, paragraph 45; *Learning from reviews of Foundation Degrees in England carried out in 2004-05*, www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Learning-from-reviews-of-Foundation-Degrees-in-England-carried-out-in-2004-05.aspx

³ HEFCE (2009/13) *Request for higher education strategies from further education colleges*, www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_13/

⁴ www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/heinfe/

⁵ *Learning from Academic review of higher education in further education colleges, 2002-07; Learning from reviews of Foundation Degrees in England carried out in 2004-05*, Conclusions

⁶ HEFCE (2006/48), *Higher education in further education colleges: Consultation on HEFCE policy*, www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2006/06_48/

5 A fairly small number of research publications deal with higher education in further education. The HEFCE good practice guide, *Supporting higher education in further education*, first produced in 2003, was substantially revised in 2009 with case studies and contributions from 47 colleges and 20 related organisations.⁷ The guide gives detailed examples of how colleges assure their higher education, including management and committee structures, partnerships, and practical arrangements for the delivery of programmes. *Managing Higher Education in Colleges* was published in 2006.⁸ Inevitably, many changes have occurred since then, some of which are reflected in the website of the HE in FECs Expert programme.⁹ The Higher Education Academy website has useful articles and papers on the management of higher education in further education, in addition to a monthly briefing for higher education managers in colleges.¹⁰

Themes

6 A consideration of the areas of good practice, the recommendations, and other references to college management of higher education in the review reports suggests that the following broad themes merit further discussion:

Strategies and policies for managing higher education

- Strategic approaches to higher education provision
- Policies for the management of higher education

College management structures

- Responsibility for higher education
- Reporting and committee structures

Internal quality assurance

- Annual monitoring reports
- Internal quality systems

Externality in quality assurance

- Engagement with the Academic Infrastructure
- External examiners
- Links with employers

Student involvement in quality assurance

- Student representation
- Management of student feedback

Quality enhancement

- Enhancement initiatives
- Dissemination of good practice

Relationships with awarding bodies

- Partnership relationships
- Link tutors

⁷ HEFCE (2009/05) *Supporting higher education in further education colleges: Policy, practice and prospects*, www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_05/

⁸ Parry, Thompson and Blackie (2006) *Managing Higher Education in Colleges*, Chapter 3; HEFCE (2009/05) *Supporting higher education in further education colleges: Policy, practice and prospects*

⁹ University of Sheffield (2010) HE in FECs Expert Programme website (HEFCE-funded Leadership, governance and management project), www.sheffield.ac.uk/heinfestratprog/index.html

¹⁰ www.heacademy.ac.uk

- Public information.

A full list of the good practice points and recommendations relating to the topic of the paper are given in Appendices A (page 22) and B (page 33).

Strategies and policies for managing higher education

Strategic approaches to higher education provision

7 HEFCE required colleges to submit a higher education strategy in January 2010, although the development and implementation of such policies attracted little attention in the form of recommendations or good practice in these reports. Examples include City College Coventry, which was recommended to complete and approve its higher education strategy.¹¹ Guildford College of Further and Higher Education should establish:

a stronger strategic and overarching steer to embed more fully its higher education strategy across the whole college, with more of an emphasis on a collegiate approach to quality assurance and enhancement.¹²

South Leicestershire College was recommended to revise and update its higher education strategy to provide a more up-to-date view of its provision.¹³ Walsall College of Arts and Technology was recommended to ensure, when reviewing its higher education strategy, that key performance indicators were identified by which the operational plan could be monitored.¹⁴

8 Several areas of good practice are identified with regard to the strategic management of higher education. Although higher education was only a relatively small component of its provision, good practice was noted at Carmel College for the management and integration of higher education within its wider portfolio.¹⁵ Hereford College of Arts' clear strategic direction and strategic aims were noted as helping to sustain 'a vibrant higher education community in the College'.¹⁶ Newcastle College's strategic approach to the management and administration of higher education, exemplified by an HE Directorate, was identified as an area of good practice.¹⁷ The strategic operation of an HE Board was noted at Westminster Kingsway College,¹⁸ while at Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, the impact of the function and role of Director of HE on provision resulted in the development of a range of differentiated strategies and practices.¹⁹

9 There are several recommendations in the reports intended to generally enhance college strategies and policies for managing higher education. Alton College was recommended to establish a more explicit and systematic approach to the management of its higher education provision.²⁰ Brooklands College was recommended to develop and implement clear and consistent structures for the strategic management of, and indicate executive responsibilities for, higher education at college level.²¹ Several reports noted the

¹¹ City College Coventry, paragraph 14

¹² Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, paragraphs 15 and 60

¹³ South Leicestershire College, paragraph 15

¹⁴ Walsall College of Arts and Technology, paragraph 16

¹⁵ Carmel College, paragraph 15

¹⁶ Hereford College of Arts, paragraph 55; paragraph 10

¹⁷ Newcastle College, paragraphs 11 and 52

¹⁸ Westminster Kingsway College, paragraph 10

¹⁹ Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 13

²⁰ Alton College, paragraph 20

²¹ Brooklands College, paragraphs 13 and 14

existence of higher education strategic groups or forums and made recommendations for improving their effectiveness. Dearne Valley College was recommended to build on the recent establishment of an HE Strategy Group to ensure a more coherent management of higher education provision.²² Other recommendations focused on clarity of operation: reviewing the rationale and terms of reference of an HE Strategic Forum with a view to enhancing its effectiveness;²³ formulating clear terms of reference for an HE Strategy Group to provide a strategic steer for higher education;²⁴ and clarifying the terms of reference of a Quality Strategy Group to ensure appropriate consideration of higher education matters.²⁵ The Sheffield College was recommended to ensure that meetings of the Higher Education Strategy Group included a full representation of appropriate senior staff.²⁶

Policies for managing higher education provision

10 Canterbury College's mature policies and processes for the management and delivery of higher education helped to assure standards.²⁷ Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education's process for developing codes of practice through full consultation with staff was found to ensure parity of the student experience in areas such as mitigating circumstances.²⁸ Chichester College's commitment to developing specific higher education policies, procedures and structures was identified as good practice. However, the College was also recommended to complete the work of development in a timely manner and ensure that the policies were appropriate, clear and internally consistent.²⁹

11 The further development of higher education policies and processes to ensure they better met the needs of the college's higher education community was recommended in several reports. For example, The Sheffield College was recommended 'to address as soon as possible the need to ensure a comprehensive and definitive overview of plans and progress' on establishing its new suite of higher education policies and procedures.³⁰ At Kidderminster College, a review of higher education quality assurance policies and processes was recommended to make their operation more transparent.³¹

12 The stage of development of strategies and policies for managing individual aspects of higher education also attracted attention in the reports. For Carshalton College, its use of research to inform the development of a higher education teaching, learning and assessment strategy was noted as good practice. However, the College was recommended, as the policy developed, to ensure that it aligned with its HE Quality Strategy.³² In three reports it was recommended that a college should review its teaching, learning and assessment policy in order to articulate a specific focus on higher education.³³ Good practice was noted in several colleges for a strategic approach to staff development.³⁴ Others were recommended to develop a plan for strategic needs in relation to staff development³⁵ or to

²² Dearne Valley College, paragraph 15

²³ Leeds College of Building, paragraph 14

²⁴ Swindon College, paragraphs 15 and 39

²⁵ York College, paragraph 14

²⁶ The Sheffield College, paragraph 19

²⁷ Canterbury College, paragraph 12

²⁸ Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 16

²⁹ Chichester College, paragraph 18

³⁰ The Sheffield College, paragraph 31

³¹ Kidderminster College, paragraph 10

³² Carshalton College, paragraphs 27 and 28

³³ Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College, paragraph 21; Hopwood Hall College, paragraphs 25 and 26; City College Coventry, paragraph 28

³⁴ Havering College of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 44; Hopwood Hall College, paragraph 24; Swindon College, paragraph 26

³⁵ Brockenhurst College, paragraph 23

review a continuing professional development strategy in order to provide staff development appropriate to the delivery of higher education.³⁶

13 In the interests of enhancement, review teams made recommendations covering a variety of individual strategies and policies for managing higher education. Several of these concerned resources, for example: establishing an effective mechanism for the strategic management of resources at Brooklands College;³⁷ developing a policy for the management of learning resources in higher education at The Sheffield College;³⁸ and developing information technology strategies at Rotherham College of Arts and Technology.³⁹ Other recommendations concerned the curriculum, for example: continuing to develop a work-based learning policy and ensure that it was embedded across all programmes;⁴⁰ developing a consistent tutorial policy;⁴¹ and introducing an explicitly overarching strategy for the mapping of transferable skills.⁴² Richmond Adult and Community College was recommended to design a detailed admissions policy for staff involved with higher education admissions and to ensure relevant training.⁴³

College management structures

14 Colleges have established a variety of structures specifically to support the management of higher education provision. The extent to which these arrangements are differentiated from the structures for further education usually depends on the size of the higher education provision. Features of good practice include 'a strategic approach to the management and administration of higher education'.⁴⁴ At Havering College of Further and Higher Education 'a quality management system which strikes an appropriate balance between centralised control and delegated power and responsibility' was identified.⁴⁵ Some reports identify good practice in the coherence of the management structures. Examples include: 'clearly defined and robust structures and roles';⁴⁶ a 'well-defined structure...and clear reporting arrangements';⁴⁷ and 'the effective management and reporting structure monitored by the Corporation'.⁴⁸

Responsibility for higher education

15 College staff responsible for the oversight of higher education hold different roles with different levels of seniority. Features of good practice note the commitment of the senior management team. For example, Bridgwater College provides 'dynamic, empowering leadership'.⁴⁹ Another report highlights 'the clear focus on quality improvement and robust systems...by strong and effective leadership'.⁵⁰ The recruitment of a governor with a special interest in higher education is seen as 'an innovative means of supporting higher education

³⁶ Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College, paragraph 43

³⁷ Brooklands College, paragraphs 42 and 43

³⁸ The Sheffield College, paragraph 49

³⁹ Rotherham College of Arts and Technology, paragraph 51; Carlisle College, paragraph 30; Salford City College, paragraph 37

⁴⁰ Bradford College, paragraph 35

⁴¹ Kingston College, paragraph 40

⁴² Reaseheath College, paragraph 29

⁴³ Richmond Adult and Community College, paragraph 36

⁴⁴ Newcastle College, paragraph 10

⁴⁵ Havering College of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 27

⁴⁶ Loughborough College, paragraph 55

⁴⁷ Central Sussex College, paragraphs 13 and 14

⁴⁸ Cambridgeshire Regional College, paragraph 10

⁴⁹ Bridgwater College, paragraph 9

⁵⁰ Westminster Kingsway College, paragraph 26

development' at Aylesbury College.⁵¹ In some reports the oversight responsibility of a deputy, vice or assistant principal was noted as providing college-wide support.⁵²

16 Colleges with substantial higher education provision are likely to have one management post directly responsible for higher education. The appointment of a dean, director or head of higher education ensures that there is a full-time post holder with an operational and sometimes strategic role.⁵³ A few colleges had recently changed their management structures for higher education.⁵⁴ This might have been a response to the demands of IQER or to HEFCE's requirement for all colleges to submit a strategy for higher education. In a few colleges, new management arrangements were set up after a Developmental engagement.⁵⁵

17 Features of good practice include the creation of new posts to contribute to the efficient management of higher education at different levels. For example, managers supported programme teams and disseminated good practice as part of the 'carefully planned and effective structure of the Higher Education Unit' at City of Bristol College.⁵⁶ City College Norwich had introduced higher education champions to:

provide a crucial link across and between the academic communities in the schools and the Senior Leadership Team through the Higher Education Quality Learning and Teaching Manager.⁵⁷

At Dearne Valley College, an enhanced lecturer role 'supports the strategic migration to Foundation Degrees and the dissemination of good practice'.⁵⁸ Some of the new posts and structures were noted as not yet fully embedded and a few recommendations stress the need to assess, develop, extend and review them.⁵⁹

Reporting and committee structures

18 The reports note a considerable number of committees and groups that relate to higher education formally or informally. While reporting lines were found to be clear in some colleges, some recommendations ask for clarification and development. The reports detail a number of different higher education groups which have related functions and operate effectively. These include a Higher Education Academic Board,⁶⁰ a Higher Education Strategic Forum,⁶¹ a Higher Education Standards Group,⁶² a Higher Education Management Committee,⁶³ and a Higher Education Quality Review Group, which was making a 'significant contribution' at South Downs College.⁶⁴

⁵¹ Aylesbury College, paragraph 10

⁵² Bridgwater College, Richmond-upon-Thames College

⁵³ Carshalton College, Sparsholt College, The Sheffield College

⁵⁴ Cambridge Regional College, Dearne Valley College, Dudley College of Technology, Hadlow College, Hertford Regional College, Walsall College

⁵⁵ South Downs College

⁵⁶ City of Bristol College, paragraphs 10 and 11

⁵⁷ City College Norwich, paragraph 22

⁵⁸ Dearne Valley College, paragraph 19

⁵⁹ Aylesbury College, Brooklands College, Hadlow College, Hopwood Hall College, Lewisham College, South Downs College, Walsall College

⁶⁰ Reaseheath College

⁶¹ Leeds College of Building

⁶² Salford College

⁶³ Askham Bryan College

⁶⁴ South Downs College, paragraph 14

19 Some reports recommended that colleges formalise and develop their committee structures, including reviewing their rationale, remit, terms of reference, reporting lines, minutes and regularity of attendance.⁶⁵ One recommendation noted the need to 'explore streamlining reporting procedures to minimise bureaucracy' at Bradford College.⁶⁶ A Higher Education Forum was established in several colleges, although its purpose could vary from sharing and disseminating good practice to being a formal committee to oversee higher education.⁶⁷ Kingston College used 'IQER to bring in a Higher Education Forum, a development day and workshops to progress issues in the Developmental engagement'.⁶⁸ Tameside College established a Higher Education Forum to provide 'a strong higher education ethos and processes'.⁶⁹ One recommendation at Carshalton College suggested that students and employers should attend programme board meetings.⁷⁰

Internal quality assurance

20 While all colleges work to the quality assurance systems of their awarding bodies, many also have their own supplementary quality systems. North West Kent College's school quality review process ensured a detailed review of each curriculum area. The Higher Education Manager contributed to this process by submitting an analysis of higher education provision, which enabled schools and programme managers 'to take ownership of the data relating to their programmes and address problems in a timely way'.⁷¹

21 Good practice was identified in a range of internal quality assurance activities. Examples included 'rigorous internal monitoring procedures which include peer review, continuation audit, and annual planning days used effectively to identify and disseminate good practice and promote consistency'⁷² and 'quality assurance and reporting structures to review the accuracy of information'.⁷³ Other good practice highlighted the effectiveness of the college's management. Examples include 'robust and consistent management of quality assurance processes',⁷⁴ 'rigorous and consistently applied quality assurance systems',⁷⁵ and 'effective internal structures for quality assurance'.⁷⁶

22 One college had developed its own code of practice to operate alongside the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)* published by QAA, and 'a systematic programme of thematic reviews of higher education as an outcome of reporting'⁷⁷ was noted as good practice at Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education. At Petroc, a Higher Education Office and its staff ensured that quality assurance procedures were effective.⁷⁸ Carlisle College had a procedure for at-risk courses failing to meet their targets⁷⁹ and Central Sussex College was noted for its rigorous

⁶⁵ Hackney Community College, Hopwood Hall College, Kingston College, Lewisham College, South Worcestershire College, Wirral Metropolitan College

⁶⁶ Bradford College

⁶⁷ Basingstoke College of Technology, Calderdale College

⁶⁸ Kingston College, paragraphs 21, 28 and 43

⁶⁹ Tameside College, paragraph 18

⁷⁰ Carshalton College

⁷¹ North West Kent College, paragraphs 15 and 17

⁷² Newcastle College, paragraph 17

⁷³ Sparsholt College, paragraph 40

⁷⁴ South Tyneside College, paragraphs 14 to 18

⁷⁵ Croydon College, paragraphs 13 to 18 and paragraph 24

⁷⁶ West Herts College, paragraphs 9 and 12

⁷⁷ Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education, paragraphs 10, 12 and 13

⁷⁸ Petroc

⁷⁹ Carlisle College

programme validation process.⁸⁰ Other examples of good practice were the development of a higher education quality manual or higher education manager's handbook.⁸¹

23 There are very few recommendations in this area. A couple of these concerned Edexcel programmes: the need to 'implement Edexcel guidance that chairs of examination boards are independent'⁸² and to 'clarify the procedures for the approval of changes to Edexcel courses and their associated programme specifications, to ensure that they are independent, robust and timely'.⁸³

24 Two other recommendations referred to documentation. Hopwood Hall College should 'ensure internal processes are more clearly articulated' as a result of changes to the higher education strategy.⁸⁴ Henley College Coventry was recommended to 'develop written guidance specific to higher education on quality assurance and good practice'.⁸⁵

Annual monitoring reports

25 Annual reviews of higher education provision form one of the key elements of internal quality assurance. Some colleges were found to produce a higher education self-assessment report which gave an analytic and focused overview of higher education.⁸⁶ Good practice was reported in two reviews for comprehensive annual monitoring report processes.⁸⁷ Other reports contained recommendations to 'produce an annual self-evaluation report and development plan'⁸⁸ or to revise the self-assessment procedure to include a focus on higher education.⁸⁹ Some recommendations noted the need 'to produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education programmes to provide an overview of its provision and to facilitate the dissemination of good practice'⁹⁰ and 'to disseminate good practice in the production of critically focused annual programme monitoring minutes and associated action plans'.⁹¹ Tameside College had developed a database that recorded the outcomes of programme reviews, which was considered to be:

a valuable management tool. Heads of Programme Areas can drill down the database to examine strengths and weaknesses in individual programmes by comparison with other programmes.⁹²

A few reports commented on rigorous course review reports and action plans.⁹³

Internal quality systems

26 The reports drew attention to other aspects of internal quality assurance. Thorough internal verification and a good standard of moderation were identified as good practice in

⁸⁰ Central Sussex College

⁸¹ Highbury College, Newcastle College, Reaseheath College, Tameside College, Wirral Metropolitan College

⁸² Henley College Coventry, paragraph 18

⁸³ Chichester College, paragraph 20

⁸⁴ Hopwood Hall College, paragraph 14

⁸⁵ Henley College Coventry, paragraph 19

⁸⁶ Brockenhurst College, Guildford College, Hertford Regional College, St Vincent College, Somerset College of Arts and Technology

⁸⁷ Henley College Coventry, paragraphs 14 and 15; Bishop Burton College, paragraph 15

⁸⁸ Askham Bryan College, paragraph 10

⁸⁹ City College Coventry, Dearne Valley College

⁹⁰ Brooksby Melton College, paragraph 15

⁹¹ Somerset College of Arts and Technology, paragraph 15

⁹² Tameside College, paragraph 21

⁹³ Calderdale College, South Devon College

three colleges.⁹⁴ Regular internal inspections were seen as good practice at Nelson and Colne College, as was an 'Enhanced Wider Review of Higher Education' at Hopwood Hall College.⁹⁵ Sample course monitoring produced effective outcomes at Hertford Regional College.

27 Two recommendations concerned feedback and follow-up activity: 'ensure that matters raised through feedback are tracked and communicated'⁹⁶ and 'ensure that issues identified through internal and external reviews are acted upon'.⁹⁷ Several recommendations deal with the recording and handling of data. These include: 'review...procedures to ensure the systematic reporting, analysis and review of trends in cohort retention, progression and achievement data across the programmes',⁹⁸ the need for student data to be used systematically,⁹⁹ and the need to clarify the data on which published achievement rates are based 'to better understand the underlying retention and completion patterns within its higher education provision'.¹⁰⁰ Specific points are made about the need for complete data on progression, achievement and retention¹⁰¹ and the importance of version control.¹⁰² Cambridge Regional College was recommended to negotiate with its awarding body to disaggregate data from the annual monitoring report.¹⁰³

Externality in quality assurance

Engagement with the Academic Infrastructure

28 Review teams are required to report on the account taken of the Academic Infrastructure under both core theme 1 (Academic standards) and core theme 2 (Quality of learning opportunities). For this aspect, there were roughly equal numbers of recommendations and features of good practice. At Croydon College, 'the Teaching, Learning and Standards Working Party works well in interpreting and disseminating information about the Academic Infrastructure to all staff'¹⁰⁴ and at Swindon College, 'in its management of academic standards, the College has engaged effectively with the Academic Infrastructure, in particular with the *Code of practice*, and embedded it in its higher education processes and practices'.¹⁰⁵ Carshalton College's positive engagement with the Academic Infrastructure ensured that it was well embedded in practice.¹⁰⁶ At Tameside College, the emphasis on, and explanation of, the Academic Infrastructure in the HE Staff Handbook, and the way in which it was related to College procedures, was identified as an area of good practice.¹⁰⁷ The report for Petroc noted the knowledge, understanding and use made of the Academic Infrastructure by all academic staff.¹⁰⁸

29 Although, in general, colleges were found to engage positively with the Academic Infrastructure, often in partnership with their awarding bodies,¹⁰⁹ there were some

⁹⁴ Abingdon and Witney College, Aquinas College and Aylesbury College

⁹⁵ Hopwood Hall College, paragraph 20

⁹⁶ Loughborough College, paragraphs 17 and 31

⁹⁷ Chichester College, paragraphs 42 and 51

⁹⁸ The College of West Anglia, paragraph 14

⁹⁹ John Kitto College

¹⁰⁰ Swindon College, paragraph 59

¹⁰¹ City College Norwich, Myerscough College and South Thames College

¹⁰² Leeds College of Building

¹⁰³ Cambridge Regional College, paragraph 14

¹⁰⁴ Croydon College, paragraph 61; paragraphs 20, 21 and 33

¹⁰⁵ Swindon College, paragraphs 67; paragraph 16 and 18

¹⁰⁶ Carshalton College, paragraphs 14 and 27

¹⁰⁷ Tameside College, paragraph 15

¹⁰⁸ Petroc, paragraph 19

¹⁰⁹ Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 16

recommendations for improving engagement with it. Many of these recommendations concerned staff development. Several colleges were recommended to take steps to familiarise their teaching staff with the Academic Infrastructure.¹¹⁰ It was recommended that The Sheffield College should 'improve the broad awareness of and consistent understanding of and training in the Academic Infrastructure among relevant staff'.¹¹¹ Other recommendations concern aligning policy with the expectations of the Academic Infrastructure. Several colleges were recommended to map or align their policies and procedures, in particular against relevant sections of the *Code of practice*.¹¹²

External examiners

30 *Section 4* of the *Code of practice* concerns external examining. This was an aspect of externality in quality assurance in which the number of recommendations in the reports outnumbered the features of good practice. Askham Bryan College had 'a proactive relationship with its external examiners, including a mid-year visit to meet with both staff and students'.¹¹³ Several areas of good practice were identified in the management of the reports of external examiners. For example, 'the full use of external examiners' reports to enhance the quality of the programmes';¹¹⁴ the enhanced process for corrective action in response to issues raised by external examiners;¹¹⁵ and the effective manner in which Myerscough College managed and disseminated external examiners' reports and the responses to them.¹¹⁶

31 Several colleges were recommended to liaise with their awarding bodies to ensure that they received the reports of external examiners, disaggregated if necessary, and that their responses to them were recorded.¹¹⁷ Other recommendations involved actions to enhance the use of external examiners' reports through consistent procedures for considering and responding to them.¹¹⁸ Chichester College was recommended the production and formal consideration of an annual composite report on external examiners' comments, for all higher education provision, to support the dissemination of effective practice and identify issues for staff or policy development.¹¹⁹ Dudley College of Technology was asked to ensure college-wide discussion and dissemination of all external examiners' reports, with details of both good practice and recommendations.¹²⁰

Links with employers

32 One area of externality in quality assurance in which the number of features of good practice identified in the reports greatly exceeded the number of recommendations for action was in the establishment and maintenance of effective links with employers. At least one third of the reports contain features of good practice relating to the management of links with employers. One area of good practice arose from close and effective links with employers, including the engagement of employers in curriculum development. This was particularly

¹¹⁰ Capel Manor College, paragraph 25; South Worcestershire College, paragraph 13; Riverside College Halton, paragraph 15

¹¹¹ The Sheffield College, paragraphs 23, 24 and 80

¹¹² Carlisle College, paragraph 12; Chichester College, paragraphs 21 and 33; College of North West London, paragraph 27; Petroc, paragraph 31

¹¹³ Askham Bryan College, paragraph 19

¹¹⁴ Calderdale College, paragraph 18

¹¹⁵ Carlisle College, paragraph 15

¹¹⁶ Myerscough College, paragraph 17

¹¹⁷ Hertford Regional College, paragraphs 21 and 22; Westminster Kingsway College, paragraph 14; Bolton Community College, paragraph 19

¹¹⁸ Hopwood Hall College, paragraph 22; Somerset College of Arts and Technology, paragraph 14

¹¹⁹ Chichester College, paragraph 24

¹²⁰ Dudley College of Technology, paragraph 18

evident for Foundation Degree programmes, and led to vocational relevance and the embedding of industry standards.¹²¹ Several reports note employer involvement in assessment and review, resulting in curriculum currency and the enhancement of the learning experience by, for example, enabling students to make links between theory and practice.¹²² Several others comment on the effective management of work-based learning and the provision of workplace opportunities.¹²³

33 A number of recommendations relate to enhancing the effectiveness of the management of links with employers, for example by reviewing these links to make them more resilient, stronger or more formal.¹²⁴ A number of other recommendations concern developing mechanisms for obtaining the views of employers, such as establishing an employer forum, and for using those views systematically in the development and delivery of the curriculum and in the review of programmes.¹²⁵ Several recommendations advise colleges to improve the information supplied to employers, particularly in relation to work-based learning.¹²⁶

Student involvement in quality assurance

Student representation

34 Some good practice was identified in the involvement of students in quality assurance processes. At Hopwood Hall College a well-promoted and effective Learner Engagement Strategy that encouraged students to take ownership of their college experience was considered good practice.¹²⁷ However, Westminster Kingsway College was recommended 'to continue to develop and implement its Learner Involvement Strategy'.¹²⁸ The involvement of students in the appointment of teachers at Richmond Adult and Community College was reported 'as a good practice mechanism for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning'.¹²⁹ At Leeds College of Building, the process for developing the student written submission for IQER, which had been embedded in the College's higher education quality cycle, was considered to be good practice.¹³⁰

35 Several recommendations intended to enhance student representation. Carlisle College was recommended to include student representation on its HE Strategy Group to ensure that student views contributed to its discussions.¹³¹ Southampton City College was

¹²¹ Dearne Valley College, paragraph 26; Tameside College, paragraphs 33 and 40; Wirral Metropolitan College, paragraph 24; College of North West London, paragraph 15; City of Bristol College, paragraph 24; Hereford College of Arts, paragraphs 14, 28 and 29; Newcastle College, paragraph 23

¹²² Myerscough College, paragraphs 20 and 29; Reaseheath College, paragraph 13; Salford College, paragraph 26; Capel Manor College, paragraph 28; Brooklands College, paragraph 29; College of North West London, paragraph 32; Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 33

¹²³ Havering College of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 41; South Worcestershire College, paragraph 26; Bradford College, paragraph 37; Bishop Burton College, paragraph 30; Riverside College Halton, paragraph 32; South Tyneside College, paragraph 32

¹²⁴ Sparsholt College, paragraph 25; Swindon College, paragraphs 50 and 54; Wigan and Leigh College, paragraph 20

¹²⁵ Dearne Valley College, paragraph 27; Carshalton College, paragraph 17;

Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College, paragraph 37; Carlisle College, paragraph 31

¹²⁶ Bishop Burton College, paragraph 35; City College Norwich, paragraph 41; Tyne Metropolitan College, paragraph 22

¹²⁷ Hopwood Hall College, paragraph 34

¹²⁸ Westminster Kingsway College, paragraph 51; paragraph 12

¹²⁹ Richmond Adult and Community College, paragraph 33

¹³⁰ Leeds College of Building, paragraph 32

¹³¹ Carlisle College, paragraph 11

recommended to ensure that students were represented on its HE Board of Studies and that some training was given to student representatives on their role, to 'ensure that the learner voice is captured in an effective way'.¹³² The Sheffield College was recommended to develop more effective ways of ensuring formal student representation on all courses.¹³³ Other colleges were recommended to implement procedures for student representation¹³⁴ or to 'encourage greater involvement of student representatives in the formal monitoring and enhancement of programmes'.¹³⁵

Management of feedback from students

36 Students are always involved in quality assurance by providing feedback on their learning experience. Several areas of good practice with regard to responsiveness to the student voice are noted in the reports. Some relate to the value of the student voice, for example: 'the importance placed on the value of the student voice in the College'¹³⁶ and the high priority given to the learner voice.¹³⁷ Other areas of good practice related to effective mechanisms for responding to the student voice. These include the canvassing of, and prompt and positive responses to, student opinion;¹³⁸ well-organised methods of collecting student feedback;¹³⁹ the use of robust and efficient processes for the collection of student views to enhance the quality of learning experiences;¹⁴⁰ a well-designed system to ensure that the student voice was both heard and acted upon;¹⁴¹ 'the extensive range of mechanisms in place to actively seek student views and the use of student feedback to improve provision';¹⁴² and the prompt and effective response to student feedback.¹⁴³

37 A number of recommendations encourage greater responsiveness to the student voice. Alton College was recommended 'to establish a formal and transparent procedure for gathering, reporting and responding to issues raised by students in a timely manner'.¹⁴⁴ City College Coventry was recommended to develop clear guidance for staff and students about the ways in which student feedback was gathered, responded to and acted upon.¹⁴⁵ Several colleges were recommended to review procedures for collecting student feedback and to improve the ways in which they communicated responses to that feedback.¹⁴⁶

Quality Enhancement

Enhancement initiatives

38 Several reports identify areas of good practice specific to quality enhancement or recommendations for improvement. Methods for identifying and disseminating features of good practice appear as both good practice and recommendations.

¹³² Southampton City College, paragraph 25

¹³³ The Sheffield College, paragraph 34

¹³⁴ Chelmsford College, paragraphs 25, 26 and 50

¹³⁵ Tameside College, paragraph 37

¹³⁶ Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College, paragraph 35

¹³⁷ Nelson and Colne College, paragraph 36

¹³⁸ Swindon College, paragraphs 24, 41 and 67

¹³⁹ Bradford College, paragraph 33

¹⁴⁰ Herefordshire College of Technology, paragraphs 28 and 52

¹⁴¹ Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education, paragraph 33

¹⁴² South Tyneside College, paragraph 66; paragraphs 20, 28 and 57

¹⁴³ Birkenhead Sixth Form College, paragraph 38; Central Sussex College, paragraph 30

¹⁴⁴ Alton College, paragraph 54; paragraphs 14 and 16

¹⁴⁵ City College Coventry, paragraphs 24 and 52

¹⁴⁶ Hackney Community College, paragraph 32; Bishop Burton College, paragraph 23; Hertford Regional College, paragraph 31; Loughborough College, paragraphs 17 and 31; Wirral Metropolitan College, paragraph 29

39 The report for Brockenhurst College noted 'a culture of continuous enhancement', exemplified by the planning and preparation of a self-assessment report for higher education programmes.¹⁴⁷ Kingston College made use of the IQER process to introduce improvements to its management of higher education provision.¹⁴⁸ Hopwood Hall College had implemented an 'Enhanced Wider Review, which reviewed college-wide policies and procedures for higher education and produced an action plan resulting in a number of new policy initiatives'.¹⁴⁹ A wide range of initiatives to enhance provision are noted, including the recruitment of a higher education governor,¹⁵⁰ and the use of a traffic light system as a method of identifying the stage reached in the development and implementation of a college policy.¹⁵¹ At Abingdon and Whitney College, commitment to the enhancement of higher education was shown by the introduction of a new and improved method to determine teaching hours in higher education that provided staff with additional teaching preparation time.¹⁵²

40 Recommendations for quality enhancement tend to reflect the stage of development and size of higher education provision. Huntingdonshire Regional College, with a small number of higher education students, was recommended to introduce a clearer focus on managing higher education within college-wide strategy and planning systems and a more direct system of reporting on higher education to the Senior Management Group.¹⁵³ City College Norwich, with a much larger higher education provision, was recommended 'to consider ways in which a higher education ethos among students could be further encouraged'.¹⁵⁴ The further development of an advanced lecturer role to promote enhancement of approaches to teaching and learning in higher education was recommended at Abingdon and Whitney College.¹⁵⁵ Another report recommended the establishment of an effective procedure for the introduction and evaluation of learning initiatives, such as anti-plagiarism software, at Brooklands College.¹⁵⁶

Dissemination of good practice

41 Effective methods for the identification and dissemination of good practice are a key element of quality enhancement, and there are substantial numbers of good practice and recommendations in this area. Reports note the dissemination of good practice by individual post holders such as HE development managers, enhanced lecturers or HE champions.¹⁵⁷ Elsewhere, good practice is disseminated by higher education units, best practice groups, working parties and forums,¹⁵⁸ and through rigorous internal monitoring procedures.¹⁵⁹

42 There are several recommendations for enhancing quality by the effective dissemination of good practice. Bolton Community College should continue to review and

¹⁴⁷ Brockenhurst College, paragraph 24

¹⁴⁸ Kingston College, paragraph 21

¹⁴⁹ Hopwood Hall College, paragraphs 59; and 20

¹⁵⁰ Aylesbury College, paragraph 10

¹⁵¹ Wigan and Leigh College, paragraph 12

¹⁵² Abingdon and Whitney College, paragraph 45

¹⁵³ Huntingdonshire Regional College, paragraphs 11 and 12

¹⁵⁴ City College Norwich, paragraph 36

¹⁵⁵ Abingdon and Whitney College, paragraph 37

¹⁵⁶ Brooklands College, paragraph 36

¹⁵⁷ Dearne Valley College, paragraph 38; City College Norwich, paragraph 22; Hertford Regional College, paragraphs 15, 17 and 33

¹⁵⁸ City of Bristol College, paragraph 11; Myerscough College, paragraph 33; South Tyneside College, paragraph 19; South Downs College, paragraph 14; Basingstoke College of Technology, paragraph 12; Tameside College, paragraph 18; Croydon College, paragraph 33

¹⁵⁹ Newcastle College, paragraph 17

develop formal methods for sharing and disseminating good practice across higher education.¹⁶⁰ Some should consider mechanisms to disseminate all features of good practice identified in higher education provision.¹⁶¹ Other colleges should monitor their systems to ensure their currency, integrity and clarity of purpose.¹⁶²

Relationships with awarding bodies

43 Colleges deliver higher education in partnership with awarding bodies.¹⁶³ For colleges that offer Edexcel programmes, their responsibilities are outlined in a Standard Note.¹⁶⁴ The partnership agreement with each higher education institution identifies the responsibilities of each partner, and must be signed by the authorised representatives. Two colleges had no signed agreement for a partnership. This led to recommendations that a written agreement should be signed before students were enrolled on a programme in order to provide security for those students and their programme.¹⁶⁵ Clarity of roles and responsibilities within the partnership makes a significant contribution to its success. One feature of good practice identified at City of Bristol College, a college with seven awarding body partners, was the joint development of:

a comprehensive set of matrices [which] indicates the different arrangements and responsibilities...so that faculty managers, programme coordinators and administrators are clear about procedures within the relevant higher education framework. The matrices cover such matters as annual programme monitoring, assessment and external examining, and procedures for obtaining student feedback.¹⁶⁶

Partnership relationships

44 A large number of features of good practice are identified in the operation of effective partnerships. These include: close, effective and good working relationships with awarding bodies;¹⁶⁷ 'strong relationships and proactive engagement';¹⁶⁸ 'open and mutually responsive relationship';¹⁶⁹ and 'a constructive and cooperative relationship'.¹⁷⁰ The positive contribution made by the participation of senior college staff in relationships with awarding bodies is identified in five reports.¹⁷¹ At Wirral Metropolitan College, the 'HE Quality Manual successfully supports the different quality assurance requirements of seven higher education partners and Edexcel'.¹⁷²

45 The opportunity to discuss strategic issues as well as operational systems can ensure open and resilient working relationships with awarding bodies. In one large

¹⁶⁰ Bolton Community College, paragraph 32

¹⁶¹ Central Sussex College, paragraph 33; South Worcestershire College, paragraph 17

¹⁶² York College, paragraph 42; Nelson and Colne College, paragraph 12; Southampton City College, paragraph 9; Wirral Metropolitan College, paragraph; The Sheffield College, paragraph 20

¹⁶³ At the time of writing, no college has been granted Foundation Degree awarding powers

¹⁶⁴ www.edexcel.com/iwantto/!%20want%20to%20%20Tasks/Edexcel%20Standard%20Note%20for%20centres%20preparing%20for%20IQER.pdf

¹⁶⁵ Capel Manor College, Hackney Community College

¹⁶⁶ City of Bristol College, paragraph 15

¹⁶⁷ College of North West London, Kingston College, St Vincent College, South Downs College, South Leicestershire College, South Tyneside College, Wirral Metropolitan College.

¹⁶⁸ Bishop Burton College, paragraph 13

¹⁶⁹ Chelmsford College, paragraph 16

¹⁷⁰ City College Norwich, paragraph 25

¹⁷¹ Bridgwater College, Brooklands College, Chelmsford College, South Devon College, Birkenhead Sixth Form College

¹⁷² Wirral Metropolitan College, paragraph 14

partnership, senior staff attended a consultative meeting at least once a term.¹⁷³ In other colleges, deputy and vice principals with oversight for higher education attended and sometimes chaired partnership committees and steering groups.¹⁷⁴ Several recommendations were made on improving the detail of collaborative working, which included ensuring that all requirements of the partnership agreement are met.¹⁷⁵ Other recommendations concerned the frequency of periodic review of all programmes and a need for clearer procedures for making changes to programmes.¹⁷⁶

Link tutors

46 Liaison or link tutors are frequently assigned from awarding body staff to advise and support college staff in the subject area. They may also advise on aligning college quality systems with the awarding body requirements. Several features of good practice in this area are identified. One example at North West Kent College is 'The key element in the operational relationship between individual programmes and the University is the strongly established role of the link tutors'.¹⁷⁷ At South Devon College:

...the positive engagement between the College and the University of Plymouth results in invaluable cooperative support being freely given by staff of the awarding body...it also provides a thorough and effective mechanism for the assurance of standards and quality of the College's higher education provision.¹⁷⁸

Recommendations show that the operation of the link tutor system varied across the provision. The report for Kidderminster College identified the need to formalise the duties and responsibilities of the link tutors,¹⁷⁹ and at Riverside College Halton, to achieve better communication between link tutors and programme leaders.¹⁸⁰

Public information

47 Awarding bodies are required to monitor regularly the information given by partner institutions to prospective students. In IQER this aspect of quality assurance is covered under core theme 3 (public information). The reports draw attention to areas of good practice in ensuring the accuracy and completeness of a range of published information. These include the general quality of marketing material¹⁸¹ and specific marketing tools, such as the prospectus:

... the College's higher education prospectus is comprehensive and of a high standard, and there are robust editorial procedures established to ensure the accuracy, accessibility and inclusivity of the information the College publishes on its website and other promotional materials.¹⁸²

At Somerset College of Arts and Technology, programme teams 'contribute effectively to validation documents of a high order'.¹⁸³ At Abingdon and Witney College the 'notable clarity

¹⁷³ South Devon College with the University of Plymouth Colleges

¹⁷⁴ Carshalton College, Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, South Devon College

¹⁷⁵ Aylesbury College, Bolton College, Hackney Community College

¹⁷⁶ Petroc

¹⁷⁷ North West Kent College, paragraph 12

¹⁷⁸ South Devon College, paragraph 13

¹⁷⁹ Kidderminster College

¹⁸⁰ Riverside College Halton

¹⁸¹ Ashton-under-Lyne College

¹⁸² Guildford College of Further and Higher Education, paragraphs 44 and 48

¹⁸³ Somerset College of Arts and Technology, paragraph 12

and accessibility of its website' was recognised.¹⁸⁴ Recommendations focused on the level of information available on the college website. For example, whether there is information about the relevant awarding body, or whether information is made sufficiently available to students who may not have access to the internet.¹⁸⁵

The themes in context

48 The reports demonstrate that IQER has had a considerable impact on colleges' management arrangements for higher education provision. Directly-funded colleges largely had some experience of other types of QAA review, but for a much larger number of colleges IQER introduced a new level and method of scrutiny. The reports make clear that management structures in many colleges had been reviewed and refined. Colleges had created new posts with responsibility for higher education, and internal quality assurance systems with higher education-specific committees and groups. HEFCE's requirement for colleges to submit a higher education strategy approved by governors made a significant contribution to the strategic thinking about higher education in colleges. The reports also draw attention to the close, collaborative relationships between colleges and their awarding bodies. The involvement of students, either directly or by means of their feedback, and IQER's emphasis on enhancement have also enabled colleges to develop their higher education provision more effectively.

Conclusions

49 Taken together, these reports draw attention to the wide variety of systems and practice in colleges offering higher education, which may be affected by the size and stage of development of the provision. The large body of good practice identified in the reports highlights a willingness to create or differentiate management systems to support higher education. A wide range of strategies and policies has been introduced to manage and assure the quality of higher education provision.

50 Colleges are at different stages of development with regard to such matters as developing internal quality assurance processes, organising student representation and the collection and use of feedback from students. There is also considerable variation in the level of engagement with external reference points, external stakeholders and methods for disseminating good practice. Some notable features of good practice are, however, identified in the reports. Recommendations are in the main intended to encourage and enhance the management of higher education provision in colleges.

Areas of strength as indicated by the evidence from the reports

51 A clear strategic direction and strategic aims for the development of higher education are frequently identified as good practice. A number of HE-specific forums or committees were identified, with the potential to be good practice. However, many of these needed clearer terms of reference and reporting lines in order to be more effective.

52 Many colleges have developed their own quality assurance processes to operate alongside those of their awarding bodies. The extent of these processes depends considerably on the size and complexity of the higher education provision in colleges. Good practice was identified in quality assurance processes that were rigorous and consistently applied.

¹⁸⁴ Abingdon and Witney College, paragraph 55

¹⁸⁵ Cambridge Regional College, Hackney Community College, Sparsholt College

53 Generally, colleges were found to have engaged positively with the Academic Infrastructure. A number of colleges have embedded the Academic Infrastructure in their policies and processes for quality assurance. However, there were a number of recommendations to further engage with it and for staff to become more familiar with the precepts of the *Code of practice* in particular.

54 Several areas of good practice were identified in the use of external examiners' reports to enhance the quality of higher education programmes. Examples include clear procedures for responding to and acting on the recommendations of external examiners, which were consistently implemented.

55 Good practice arose from close and effective links with employers, including the engagement of employers in curriculum development, which enabled students to make links between theory and practice. Effective management of work-based learning was also highlighted.

56 Colleges generally have learner engagement strategies to promote the involvement of students in quality assurance, a number of which were highlighted as good practice. The high priority given to the student voice was evident in many reports. However, formal engagement of higher education students in quality forums could be further developed.

57 A number of mechanisms for identifying and disseminating good practice were identified. Examples included the review and improvement of higher education policies, and higher-education-specific self-assessment reports. Other mechanisms for disseminating good practice included higher education units, best practice groups, working parties and forums.

58 Where colleges deliver higher education in collaboration with a higher education institution, clarity of roles and responsibilities within the partnership makes a significant contribution to its success. A large number of features of good practice were identified in the operation of effective partnerships, which in many cases were constructive, cooperative and proactive. Link tutors frequently perform a pivotal role in ensuring a successful collaboration. A college with multiple awarding bodies had a higher education quality manual that clearly differentiated the requirements of the higher education institutions and Edexcel, which was considered good practice.

Areas where further work is required

59 A number of recommendations related to the fact that some of the recently introduced structures and systems for managing higher education needed to be assessed, reviewed and embedded. The reports demonstrate how a growing number of colleges have identified a need to differentiate their quality assurance systems for higher education from those used in the management of further education programmes.

60 There were a number of recommendations to enhance colleges' strategies and policies for managing higher education, including further developing and embedding the higher education strategy required by HEFCE. Colleges were also recommended to develop clear and consistent management and reporting structures. Policies for managing aspects of higher education could also be more clearly aligned with strategic plans in some cases.

61 Recommendations that concerned internal quality assurance processes generally referred to developing greater clarity of process and consistency in operation. Some colleges were recommended to develop more detailed written guidance on higher-education-specific aspects of quality assurance.

62 Several colleges were recommended to liaise with their awarding bodies to ensure that they received the reports of external examiners, disaggregated if necessary, and that their responses to them were recorded. Colleges were also recommended to devise or further develop consistent procedures for responding to external examiners' reports.

63 While there was a substantial amount of good practice highlighted in relation to working with employers, some recommendations were made to further strengthen such links, and to develop mechanisms for more systematically obtaining the views of employers to improve curriculum relevance.

64 The reports indicate that colleges could further develop their engagement of higher education students in quality processes through a formal system of student representatives on higher education committees or boards. Colleges could also further develop systems to feed back to students any changes that had been made in response to issues raised by them.

65 Colleges with fewer higher education students were generally recommended to develop clearer procedures for identifying higher-education-specific issues through monitoring and review processes. Some colleges could also further develop more systematic approaches to identifying and disseminating good practice.

66 Recommendations about the relationships between awarding bodies and colleges concerned greater clarity of roles and responsibilities, and the level of public information available about higher education programmes. Some colleges were advised to develop programme specifications for Edexcel programmes. Information about the awarding body for each higher education programme was not always available on college websites.

Appendix A: Good practice relating to college management

Action planning

- the procedure followed for corrective action in response to issues raised by Edexcel external examiners [Carlisle College]
- comprehensive annual monitoring processes, including effective action planning, ensure that the higher education provision is subject to continuous improvement and meets the requirements of the awarding bodies [Henley College, Coventry]
- the College has implemented the Developmental engagement action plan most comprehensively and used it as a springboard for further enhancements to academic standards [Hereford College of Arts]
- in managing the provision, monitoring meetings are evaluative and focused on improving learning and driven by an effective action plan [John Kitto College]
- the management and dissemination of external examiners' reports and of the College's responses to them ensures that they are subject to wide and close consideration [Myerscough College]
- the incorporation of key actions and recommendations from the higher education annual programme reports into the Quality Improvement Plan to provide senior management with the information needed to oversee the management of quality and standards effectively [Nelson & Colne College]
- the way the College has responded to the Developmental engagement, including the formation of the higher education Best Practice Group to oversee the dissemination of good practice across all programmes and the appointment of quality learning advisers [South Tyneside College]
- the development of the programme review database, which provides increasing flexibility as a tool for comparing data across programmes and increasing external links in the monitoring and enhancement of standards and quality, and which aids the monitoring of performance and the progress of action plans [Tameside College]
- the use of the 'traffic light system' in both the IQER development plan and Higher Education Audit as a method for identifying the stage reached in the development and implementation of a College policy in accordance with the Academic Infrastructure [Wigan & Leigh College]

Collaborative working with awarding bodies

- the engagement between the College and Staffordshire University, as exemplified by the relationship between the University Link Tutor and Programme Area Manager and the College course leader, is fully collaborative and proactive [Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College]
- the close and regular engagements between key staff in the College and with the local University-led partnership enable collective and consistent assurance of both standards and quality of provision [Birkenhead Sixth Form College]
- the College has strong relationships with the awarding bodies that embody a proactive engagement with the maintenance of academic standards [Bishop Burton College]
- clear and effective partnerships with Farnborough College and the University of Greenwich network colleges assure academic standards in assessment [Brockenhurst College]
- the open and collaborative partnership with Oxford Brookes University, including active participation at a senior level, supports the College in maintaining appropriate academic standards on its higher education courses [Brooklands College]

Outcomes from IQER: 2008-10

- regular and effective use is made of the University Discipline Network Groups to enhance the College's own operation and understanding of higher education, as well as to share good practice with other consortium partners [Chelmsford College]
- the College makes good use of its open and productive external relations for the benefit of academic and professional support staff, notably in dealing with its supportive awarding body and through its active engagement with regional groups [Chelmsford College]
- the College has a constructive and cooperative relationship with its awarding partner, the University of East Anglia, as exemplified by the Annual Synoptic Report [City College Norwich]
- the open and constructive dialogue with the College is valued and commended by the awarding bodies [City of Bristol College]
- the close and effective relationship between the College and all its awarding bodies [College of North West London]
- The College's engagement with its awarding bodies is efficient, effective and transparent [Hadlow College]
- The College's interaction with its partners in the Consortium contributes to a culture of continuous quality improvement [Hertford Regional College]
- the interaction between the College and its awarding bodies is efficient and effective [Highbury College]
- the effective relationships between staff at the College and those within the awarding bodies facilitate the management of HE programmes and ensure that issues can be identified and addressed promptly and effectively [Kingston College]
- the College's highly active participation in the awarding body's partnership scheme ensures it is meeting the requirements of the University and benefiting from meetings with other colleges [Lancaster and Morecombe College]
- the strength and effectiveness of the links between the College and Leeds Metropolitan University [Leeds College of Building]
- the College's work with the University to develop programmes to encourage wider participation and provide opportunities for local students to progress to higher education [Newham Sixth Form College]
- The College effectively coordinates its internal school quality processes with those of the University of Greenwich in order to maintain standards and enhance quality [North West Kent College]
- the positive engagement between the College and the University of Plymouth results in valuable cooperative support being freely given by staff of the awarding body. It also provides a thorough and effective mechanism for the assurance of standards and quality of the College's higher education provision [South Devon College]
- the excellent working relationship with University of Plymouth Colleges is valuable in supporting the College in enhancing the quality of learning opportunities [South Devon College]
- there is a close and effective working relationship with the awarding bodies at all levels of the management of the provision [South Downs College]
- the College's close and effective relationships with the University and partnership colleges provide excellent opportunities for staff development related to higher education [South Leicestershire College]
- the well-established, close and effective partnership links that the College has formed with its awarding bodies [South Tyneside College]
- the careful and very effective management of the strategic planning process, which ensures that programme development responds to the College's strategic aims in partnership with its awarding bodies [South Tyneside College]

- the close working relationship with both awarding bodies underpins the security of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience [St Vincent College]
- the comprehensive nature and scope of the links between the College and the University enables, at a strategic and operational level, the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the provision and collaborative developments, such as the joint validation and delivery of Foundation Degrees [The College of West Anglia]
- the College management of higher education is enhanced by the support of strong consortium arrangements with the University of Hertfordshire [West Hertfordshire College]
- the good working relationships which exist between the college and its higher education partners help to maintain accurate and comprehensive information [Wirral Metropolitan College]
- the progression agreement with the University of Winchester is well used by students and provides them with further opportunities for personal, professional and academic development [Brockenhurst College]

Collaborative working within the college

- the Higher Education Office and its staff support and provide guidance to academic staff, and ensure that the quality assurance processes work effectively and achieve enhancement of the provision [Petroc]
- programme teams contribute most effectively to validations and produce documentation of a high order [Somerset College of Arts and Technology]
- good practice in the divisions is now being disseminated very effectively across the College, as exemplified by the production of the Assessment Feedback Expectations and Good Practice Guide, the work of the advanced practitioners and the development of the Higher Education Community intranet site [Somerset College of Arts and Technology]
- all levels of staff, including members of the governing body, senior management, programme leaders and teaching staff are fully engaged in the process of quality assurance [St Vincent College]

Management structures, including committees and boards

- the effective dissemination of good practice through the Higher Education Forum, resulting in improved assessment [Basingstoke College of Technology]
- The College has demonstrated a strong commitment to the management of its responsibilities for its higher education provision as evidenced by the appointment of a Director of Adult Learning and Higher Education, the establishment of the Higher Education Committee and the development of higher education-specific policies, processes and procedures [Bolton Community College]
- the work of the Quality Improvement and Performance Unit in supporting and enhancing the management and delivery of higher education [Bradford College]
- the dynamic and empowering leadership of the Senior Management Team fosters a culture of continuous improvement [Bridgwater College]
- the HE Forum is used effectively to make staff aware of the higher education policy and practices, the Academic Infrastructure and good practice in the College [Calderdale College]
- there is an effective management and reporting structure for higher education provision, which now includes monitoring by the College Corporation, thus

- enhancing the status of higher education in the College [Cambridge Regional College]
- there is a well defined structure for the management of higher education in the College, with clear reporting arrangements to ensure the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities [Central Sussex College]
- the College has a highly effective management and committee structure, underpinned and informed by the Higher Education Quality Enhancement and Support Team, which leads to a culture of continuous improvement [City College Norwich]
- the establishment of the Higher Education Board of Studies as the focus of all matters concerned with higher education [Dudley College of Technology]
- the College has robust arrangements for the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, based on its own internal structures and those of the awarding bodies [Herefordshire College]
- The post of Higher Education Development Manager has enhanced leadership and guidance to staff and provides an overview of higher education quality assurance processes, which contributes to the maintenance and enhancement of standards and the quality of the provision [Hertford Regional College]
- There is an effective additional layer of scrutiny and ownership of quality by the College staff whereby, prior to submission to the university Programme Boards, annual monitoring reports are peer reviewed by the Higher Education Quality Panel [King George V College]
- the work of the Higher Education Development Group is an effective part of the College's quality assurance processes by providing a thorough evaluation and extensive discussion of the provision, including a careful consideration of the reports it receives [Lancaster and Morecombe College]
- academic standards and quality are robustly managed through the College quality assurance and reporting procedures, including the new Higher Education Academic Board, and are underpinned by close and responsive relationships between the College and its awarding bodies [Reaseheath College]
- the new senior management team and HE Academic Board has raised the profile of higher education and clarified reporting lines [Riverside College Halton]
- the Higher Education Standards Group that oversees the College's higher education courses, which has a broad and expanding remit to ensure that the provision engages with the *Code of practice*, monitors standards and moderates the courses [Salford College]
- the Higher Education Quality Review Group is making a significant contribution to the maintenance of academic standards and the enhancement of learning opportunities [South Downs College]
- the HE Forum, which encourages a strong higher education ethos and facilitates and encourages the sharing of good practice across the College [Tameside College]
- the College has established effective internal structures and processes for the management and quality assurance of academic standards and learning opportunities [West Hertfordshire College]
- the structure for the management of higher education academic standards and the strategic nature of the Higher Education Board [Westminster Kingsway College]
- the higher education infrastructure, which includes: a higher education strategy; specific higher education quality assurance and enhancement procedures; a separate structure of committees and groups for higher education and staff roles, which are specific to the development and management of higher education provision [Wigan & Leigh College]

Externality in quality management

- the mid-year visit from external examiners, which promotes opportunities for ongoing reflection and review of programmes [Askham Bryan College]
- there are robust procedures and detailed documentation accompanying the receipt of external examiners' reports that involves the grading of risks, the monitoring of progress in addressing concerns and signing off completed action plans [Calderdale College]
- the process of collaboration with partners in the Performance Industries Pathway Scheme in the development of the Foundation Degree in Musical Theatre [Dudley College of Technology]

Initiatives to promote better management

- the College's commitment to the enhancement of higher education shown by the introduction of a new and improved methodology to determine the teaching hours for staff teaching the higher education provision [Abingdon and Witney College]
- the recruitment of a higher education governor is an innovative means of supporting the development of higher education in the College [Aylesbury College]
- the initiative taken by the College in leading the development and provision of alternative delivery approaches to assist students elsewhere in the partnership during a time of staff shortage in one partner, has led to an established practice that can be utilised to enhance the student learning experience in similar situations [Birkenhead Sixth Form College]
- the role and function of Higher Education Champions in the maintenance and enhancement of quality processes to the benefit of students and staff has effectively and substantially developed since the Developmental engagement [City College Norwich]
- the College has made good use of the IQER process to introduce improvements in its management of its higher education provision, for example, the introduction of an HE Forum, the organisation of a development day involving validating partners and the provision of workshops to progress the issues raised during the developmental engagement on assessment [Kingston College]
- the Learning Development Unit provides valuable assistance to staff in the development of online materials and e-tutoring skills [Myerscough College]

Use of management information

- the College's commitment to the enhancement of higher education shown by the introduction of a new and improved methodology to determine the teaching hours for staff teaching the higher education provision [Abingdon and Witney College]
- the recruitment of a higher education governor is an innovative means of supporting the development of higher education in the College [Aylesbury College]
- the initiative taken by the College in leading the development and provision of alternative delivery approaches to assist students elsewhere in the partnership during a time of staff shortage in one partner, has led to an established practice that can be utilised to enhance the student learning experience in similar situations [Birkenhead Sixth Form College]
- the role and function of Higher Education Champions in the maintenance and enhancement of quality processes to the benefit of students and staff has effectively and substantially developed since the Developmental engagement [City College Norwich]

Policies and strategies for managing higher education

- the robust and rigorously operated system of internal moderation, which contributes significantly to the security of academic standards and in which students, staff and external examiners have expressed confidence [Abingdon and Witney College]
- the College's transparent, rigorous and effective process for monitoring the content of student materials and handbook [Abingdon and Witney College]
- the thoroughness with which internal verification processes are carried out is highly effective in ensuring academic standards [Aylesbury College]
- retention and completion rates are generally high in most areas, with well-developed strategies to facilitate internal progression from level 3 courses to higher education and to honours degrees from Foundation Degrees [Bishop Burton College]
- quality assurance procedures have clear lines of communication and allocated responsibilities and are implemented rigorously thus ensuring effective delegation, staff ownership and the maintenance of standards [Brockenhurst College]
- student retention and achievement rates are impressive [Brockenhurst College]
- there are mature policies and processes for the management and delivery of higher education in the College which assure overall standards [Canterbury College]
- the management and integration of the College's higher education provision within its wider portfolio of activities [Carmel College]
- strong, reflective and evaluative leadership, which fosters effective relationships with awarding bodies and provides strong support to staff and students [Carshalton College]
- the use of research to inform the development of the higher education learning and teaching strategy, which provides a well-informed focus on the needs of higher education students [Carshalton College]
- the Programme Validation Process provides a rigorous means for the consideration of new programmes [Central Sussex College]
- the College's commitment to developing specific higher education policies, procedures and structures [Chichester College]
- clear and comprehensive quality assurance processes, supported by useful matrices that set out mutual responsibilities, enable awarding bodies to have confidence in the higher education provision [City of Bristol College]
- a carefully planned and effective structure for higher education ensures quality and standards and the dissemination of good practice through the Higher Education Unit and the Strand Manager role [City of Bristol College]
- commendable achievement of students who progress to honours level from the Foundation Degree in Construction [College of North West London]
- the flexible multi-mode delivery available to students supports the College's aim to widen participation [College of North West London]
- the rigorous and consistently applied quality systems monitor effectively programme delivery, student performance, progression and achievement [Croydon College]
- the use of an Enhanced Lecturer to support both the College's strategic migration to Foundation Degrees and the dissemination of good practice across the provision [Dearne Valley College]
- the process of developing Institute codes of practice, based on full consultation with staff and students and awarding bodies, ensures the parity of student experience across the Institute and for the securing of academic standards [Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education]
- the role and function of the Director of Higher Education has had a significant and crucial impact on the development of the College's higher education provision by

- developing a range of differentiated strategies and practices, leading the drive for consistency of operation across the College [Guildford College of Further and Higher Education]
- a quality management system which strikes an appropriate balance between centralised control and delegated power and responsibility, resulting in highly effective curriculum planning and delivery [Havering College of Further and Higher Education]
 - the Curriculum Map, which places strategic emphasis on progression from further education into and through higher education and plays a key role in achieving the College's strategic objectives [Havering College of Further and Higher Education]
 - the support provided to staff by the Quality and Standards section in the continued and effective operation of College strategies, policies and procedures relating to quality and standards, including the preparations for the Summative review, the evaluative self-evaluation and availability of detailed supporting documentation [Havering College of Further and Higher Education]
 - the College's clear strategic direction and its robust and proactive procedures for managing and delivering academic standards through engagement with the Academic Infrastructure are well integrated into its arrangements with the awarding bodies and have created, and are helping to sustain, a vibrant higher education community in the College [Hereford College of Arts]
 - the Higher Education Quality Manual is both comprehensive and accessible [Highbury College]
 - The College makes a significant investment in underwriting the responsibilities of the Higher Education Manager through a generous remission of hours arrangement [King George V College]
 - the effective management of the curriculum and the learning and teaching experience provided by higher education staff demonstrated by the established record of a significant number of prizes and scholarships (from professional and other bodies) being awarded to its students [Leeds College of Building]
 - the Higher Education Quality Procedures Handbook toolkit, which programme teams use to evaluate their implementation of the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*, supports the embedding of the Academic Infrastructure [Lewisham College]
 - The College has clearly defined and robust structures and roles for ensuring the academic standards of its higher education provision and maintaining effective relationships with its range of awarding bodies [Loughborough College]
 - the College has taken a strategic approach to the management and administration of its higher education, exemplified by the Higher Education Directorate, with agreed higher education procedures being effectively implemented by staff at all levels [Newcastle College]
 - there is a range of rigorous internal monitoring procedures, including peer review, continuation audit and annual planning days, which are used effectively to identify and disseminate good practice and promote consistency [Newcastle College]
 - the College has effectively adapted its established further education procedures to ensure their effectiveness for the higher education provision, notably in relation to teaching observations and student support [Newcastle College]
 - The College has developed innovative programmes that build on specialist strengths and are not otherwise available locally [North West Kent College]
 - the documentation and guidance on quality assurance processes are provided in a user-friendly format to College staff through the Higher Education Managers' Handbook, the staff portal and the websites of awarding bodies [Reaseheath College]
 - there is effective management of an extensive range of high quality resources [South Downs College]

- the robust and consistent overall management of quality assurance processes leading to the security of academic standards and programmes that are fit for purpose [South Tyneside College]
- the existing arrangements for the management of higher education, which delineate clear responsibilities and discrete processes for the management and assurance of standards in higher education at different levels within the College organisational matrix [Sparsholt College]
- the quality assurance and reporting procedures in place to review the accuracy of information, and to identify when to take appropriate action [Sparsholt College]
- the raised profile and direction of the College's higher education provision is clearly articulated within the College Strategic Recovery Plan 2008-2011; it is managed and delivered effectively through a number of dedicated higher education groups and individuals [Swindon College]
- the programme combines deaf and hearing cultures in one programme, providing a specialist provision designed to meet demonstrable market needs in a large urban location [The City Literary Institute]
- the programme uses both English and British Sign Language as the language of tuition and assessment [The City Literary Institute]
- the clear articulation of and focus on the whole quality improvement process and the robust systems of self-assessment and validation by strong and effective leadership underpinned by an evaluative and evidence-based approach [Westminster Kingsway College]
- the Higher Education Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy, which builds on good practice by enabling the College to articulate key learning and teaching values in order to enhance the quality of student learning [Wigan & Leigh College]
- the excellent record of addressing widening participation through a variety of measures, including the extensive 'College in the Community' network [Wigan & Leigh College]
- an HE Quality Manual successfully supports the different quality assurance requirements of seven higher education partners and Edexcel [Wirral Metropolitan College]
- the 'Raising the Standards' campaign, by laying down standards for teaching and learning, clarifies what is expected of staff in the continued provision of an outstanding learning environment [York College]

Internal quality review processes

- the mixture of formal and informal processes for gathering the views of staff and students demonstrated by the FdA Early Years Care and Education staff [Alton College]
- the comprehensive processes for annual monitoring operate efficiently and help to keep standards constantly under review [Bishop Burton College]
- the new process of annual course evaluation with its emphasis on, in particular, the student voice and resource requirements [Bradford College]
- staff ownership of the higher education provision and their commitment to its development lead to a culture of continuous enhancement exemplified by, for example, the planning and preparation of a cross-college self-assessment report for higher education programmes [Brockenhurst College]
- the internal validation process for the Foundation Degree proposals is rigorous and carefully documented and makes use of a list of well-considered prompts to test out the strength of proposals and of external advisers and employers [Calderdale College]

- the course review and evaluation reports for the FdA Early Years and HND Business are highly evaluative, comprehensive and contribute to the effective management of the provision [Calderdale College]
- College-derived monitoring processes, including student evaluations, supplement the aggregated information supplied by Anglia Ruskin University [Cambridge Regional College]
- the Institute has introduced a systematic programme of thematic reviews of the higher education provision as an outcome of the Institute's effective integrated reporting structures, which lead to both dissemination of good practice and any necessary actions [Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education]
- the production of a specific annual self-assessment report for the higher education provision has had a significant impact on enhancement and development [Guildford College of Further and Higher Education]
- the outcomes of sample course monitoring are used effectively to inform and enhance academic standards [Hereford College of Arts]
- The higher education self-assessment report provides a focused overview of programmes, identifies strengths and areas for development and ensures continuing enhancement of the higher education provision [Hertford Regional College]
- the Enhanced Wider Review which reviewed college-wide policies and procedures for higher education and produced an action plan resulting in a number of new policy initiatives [Hopwood Hall College]
- the report on equality and diversity in the College higher education provision which constitutes a model of direct reporting on higher education to the College's Senior Management Group [Huntingdonshire Regional College]
- the review and evaluation procedures at programme level that assure the quality of the provision [Lakes College]
- the annual self-evaluation documents produced by divisions are analytic, well-focused and appropriately matched to the quality assurance of higher education in the College [Somerset College of Arts and Technology]
- a rigorous course review process results in clear action plans which promote improvement [South Devon College]
- the newly developed Higher Education Self-assessment Report and action plan is both evaluative and developmental, and makes an effective addition to the College's quality assurance cycle [St Vincent College]
- the direct link between the allocation of staff development resources and the annual self-assessment process [Westminster Kingsway College]

Student involvement in quality management

- the College recognises the importance of seeking students' views, and the use of posters is an effective means of feeding back to students [Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College]
- the College's well-organised methods of collecting student feedback, which include the involvement of the Students' Union, and its responsiveness to the student voice [Bradford College]
- the well promoted and effective Learner Engagement Strategy which is encouraging students to take ownership of their College experience [Hopwood Hall College]
- the process for developing the student written submission which is now embedded in the higher education quality cycle [Leeds College of Building]
- the involvement of students in the appointment of teachers [Richmond upon Thames College]

Outcomes from IQER: 2008-10

- students make valuable contributions to the enhancement of their programmes, making effective use of the many feedback opportunities that are available to them [St Vincent College]
- the positive and prompt reaction of College staff to student feedback leads to enhancement of the student learning experience as evidenced specifically in the provision of clinically relevant examples in the mathematics subject area [Birkenhead Sixth Form College]
- the College responds quickly and effectively to student opinion to improve learning opportunities [Central Sussex College]
- the College's monitoring of and responsiveness to student views and evaluations has become significantly more sustained and consistent since the Developmental engagement [City College Norwich]
- there are well-designed systems to ensure that the student voice is both heard and acted on [Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education]
- there are robust and efficient processes for the collection of student views that are used effectively to enhance the quality of learning opportunities [Herefordshire College]
- high priority is given to the Learner Voice at the College and there are effective mechanisms to ensure the inclusion of higher education learners in canvassing student opinion [Nelson & Colne College]
- staff provide a timely and supportive response to any issues that are raised by the students [Riverside College Halton]
- the College is responsive to student needs, as exemplified by the Student One Stop service, the Student Council and the involvement of students in the annual programme monitoring process [Somerset College of Arts and Technology]
- the extensive range of mechanisms in place to actively seek student views and the use of student feedback to improve provision [South Tyneside College]
- the student voice is canvassed widely and responded to promptly and positively [Swindon College].

Appendix B: Recommendations relating to college management

Action planning

- engage with the University of Portsmouth to ensure that responses are made to annual reports [Alton College]
- ensure that issues identified through internal and external review processes are acted upon in a timely manner [Chichester College]
- complete actions arising from its Developmental engagement action plan in relation to the consideration of external examiner reports [Hackney Community College]
- expand the database, developed to enable external examiner and verifier activities to be monitored and action points tracked, as soon as possible to cover external examiner reports for all higher education programmes [Havering College of Further and Higher Education]
- continue implementing the actions planned to make improvements to the learning opportunities at Thames Gateway College, pending the longer term relocation of higher education engineering programmes to the College's main campus [Havering College of Further and Higher Education]
- continue to focus on addressing issues and reviewing the outcomes of any improvement points arising from reports or reviews [King George V College]
- disseminate good practice in the production of critically focused annual programme monitoring minutes and associated action plans [Somerset College of Arts and Technology]
- continue to progress the action plan arising from the Developmental engagement [South Downs College]
- review its management of academic standards and quality, and ensure that an effective means exists to act on the advice offered by the awarding body and the External Examiner [The City Literary Institute]
- review the annual monitoring reports and action plans to ensure their rigorous completion in order to support quality improvement [The College of West Anglia]
- ensure that when reviewing the Higher Education Strategy key performance indicators are identified by which the delivery of the plan can be monitored [Walsall College of Arts and Technology]

Collaborative working with awarding bodies

- engage with its awarding bodies, to implement more consistent procedures for receiving, monitoring, reporting and disseminating external examiners' reports [Bolton Community College]
- explore with the University how it might make use of the rigorous external examiner reporting procedures to obtain feedback in sufficient detail to allow course teams to address issues and enhance the provision at the level of the individual awards [Chelmsford College]
- engage in dialogue with the awarding body and collaborative partners to simplify and clarify the wording of some course documents; in particular, the module descriptor handbooks [Derwentside College]
- engage with the University to clarify and formalise the duties and responsibilities of the link tutors, with a view to enhancing further the College's quality assurance processes [Kidderminster College]

- continue to work with the University of Greenwich in establishing effective systems through which all staff at the College have the opportunity to receive timely qualitative feedback from external examiners [North West Kent College]
- continue to discuss with the University whether programmes would benefit from periodic review to provide a general overview which incorporates external input [Petroc]
- discuss with the University whether the proportion of change in any one year (50 per cent) which is permitted to programmes without recourse to revalidation is too high [Petroc]

Partnership agreements with awarding bodies

- ensure that in future there is a written and signed agreement with the awarding body before accepting students on a programme [Capel Manor College]
- finalise its articulation arrangements with other institutions to provide students with more opportunities to progress to undergraduate programmes [Capel Manor College]
- ensure that it has a signed legal agreement with the awarding body in place for each programme before students are enrolled [Hackney Community College]
- review thoroughly each of its collaborative agreements and put in place what is necessary to ensure it is in compliance with them [Hackney Community College]
- liaise with its university awarding partners to confirm its responsibilities for public information, clearly communicate its quality control procedures to staff, and devise mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of these procedures [Richmond upon Thames College]

Management structures, including committees and boards

- establish a committee, as indicated by its partnership agreement with the awarding body, to enable Certificate in Education staff and students to meet or to formalise the ways issues are currently considered, to ensure that feedback between the two bodies is robust and transparent [Alton College]
- take measures to formalise arrangements and establish a College-based subcommittee that meets in full the requirements of the Collaborative Agreement [Aquinas College]
- extend the role of the Higher Education Management Committee, to provide a greater oversight of higher education provision [Askham Bryan College]
- review the effectiveness of the committee structure, particularly the remit of the Higher Education Group, to ensure full consideration of higher education matters and the dissemination of good practice [Aylesbury College]
- ensure that the Programme Management Committee meets, records its meeting and produces an action plan, in accordance with the Partnership Agreement [Capel Manor College]
- the current arrangements for meetings of programme boards should be reviewed to help facilitate attendance by employer and student representatives and hence improve transparency and their effectiveness [Carshalton College]
- provide some kind of forum or equivalent, specifically to reflect on higher education matters; this might promote, among other things, greater staff ownership and use of the Academic Infrastructure, and help to address the lack of specific higher education focus within existing systems and procedures [Chelmsford College]
- consolidate and extend the terms of reference for the Higher Education Committee so that major issues arising from external examiners' reports and annual monitoring

- reports from awarding bodies are scrutinised and actions noted [City College Coventry]
- ensure that the Higher Education Forum meets and that more effort is made to familiarise students with its existence and function [City College Coventry]
 - ensure that the minutes of the Higher Education Board accurately report and track the outcomes of action plans which address the issues raised [College of North West London]
 - build upon the recent establishment of the Higher Education Strategy Group in order to ensure a more coherent management of the higher education provision through streamlined reporting structures [Dearne Valley College]
 - bring all external examiners' reports, and the detail of both good practice and recommendations, to a meeting of the Higher Education Board of Studies to ensure full college-wide discussion and dissemination [Dudley College of Technology]
 - consider the formalisation of the Higher Education Forum remit and constitution to include consideration of academic standards and quality of learning opportunities [Hackney Community College]
 - ensure that, in line with any requirements from its awarding bodies, each course has its own course committee, with a specific remit including the consideration of matters relating to academic standards and the quality of the learning experience [Hackney Community College]
 - assess formally, at an appropriate date, the effectiveness of the new senior management structure with respect to the responsibilities of the post-holders for the higher education provision [Hadlow College]
 - implement Edexcel guidelines so that chairs of examination boards are independent of the programme team, to ensure the integrity and transparency of assessment decisions [Henley College Coventry]
 - clarify the management roles, reporting arrangements and committee structures to ensure consistency within the College's higher education provision [Hopwood Hall College]
 - identify a clear link and set of working relationships between the Higher Education Strategy Group and the Higher Education Forum [Hopwood Hall College]
 - strengthen overall College responsibility for compliance with the University's quality assurance systems through reporting to the College's Senior Management Group [Huntingdonshire Regional College]
 - review the frequency of its Higher Education Forum meetings to ensure its more regular consideration of higher education developmental and operational issues, and to rewrite its remit to reflect more fully its expanding role in monitoring and enhancing programme delivery [Kidderminster College]
 - the HE Forum should be further developed to enable it to provide a strategic framework for the progress of HE provision and to act as a focus for the bringing together of a range of issues including HE specific documentation and improvements in the consistency of personal tutorials [Kingston College]
 - establish clear terms of reference and reporting lines for the higher education forum that will inform the management of academic standards and promote good practice across the provision [Lakes College]
 - review and clarify internal quality management procedures and reporting arrangements at institutional level, in order to assure the College that its responsibilities for the management and delivery of standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies are discharged fully, and can be audited [Lakes College]
 - consider reviewing the rationale and terms of reference of both the Higher Education Practitioners' Forum and the Higher Education Strategic Forum with a view to enhancing their effectiveness [Leeds College of Building]

Outcomes from IQER: 2008-10

- review and clarify the reporting lines between the Higher Education Forum and its subcommittees [Lewisham College]
- set up a board of study or similar body, in order to support the management of any future growth of higher education provision and the sharing of best practice across programme areas [Nelson & Colne College]
- set up a more formal management process and reporting structure for the management of academic standards should it decide to develop higher education programmes [Newham Sixth Form College]
- review the large number of committees and groups across the College, Consortium and University that has the potential for duplication of activities, and streamline committee structures [North Hertfordshire College]
- clarify the responsibilities of each of its committees involved in the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, and the reporting lines between them [Richmond upon Thames College]
- review and evaluate the new structure for the management and quality assurance of the higher education provision [South Downs College]
- develop the Cross College Higher Education Group to ensure it has oversight of the maintenance and enhancement of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities [South Leicestershire College]
- ensure that the Higher Education Working Group and Higher Education Forum implement their terms of reference, thereby improving the effectiveness of the quality procedures [South Thames College]
- review the terms of reference and role of the Higher Education Board of Studies to ensure that it has a more prominent role in the quality assurance, management and spreading of good practice in higher education [Southampton City College]
- consolidate the role of the Higher Education Managers' Committee as a forum for maintaining and enhancing the quality and the profile of the provision [St Vincent College]
- formulate clear terms of reference for the Higher Education Strategy Group and Higher Education Development Group, with a view to clarifying respective roles and responsibilities and allowing the former to provide a strategic steer for the College's higher education provision [Swindon College]
- reconsider the leadership of the programme to ensure clear lines of reporting both within the College and to the awarding body [The City Literary Institute]
- ensure future meetings of the Higher Education Strategy Group include full representation of appropriate senior staff [The Sheffield College]
- review and clarify the names and terms of reference of the two groups dealing with operational level management issues in higher education and sharing of good practices across the College [The Sheffield College]
- ensure that all committees relevant to higher education meet regularly and fulfil their terms of reference [Tyne Metropolitan College]
- monitor and review the effectiveness of the new Higher Education Management Structure to ensure it supports the academic standards of the provision [Walsall College of Arts and Technology]
- publish formal written terms of reference for the Higher Education Board [Westminster Kingsway College]
- develop and clarify the role of the Higher Education Forum as a mechanism for the sharing of good practice [Wirral Metropolitan College]
- clarify the terms of reference of the Quality Strategy Group and ensure appropriate consideration of higher education matters by the Group [York College]
- review the operation of internal boards to ensure College and awarding body procedures are consistently applied [York College]

Externality in quality management

- ensure that for external examiners the procedures for the nomination and appointment are followed and that there is a written and signed agreement in place [Capel Manor College]
- liaise with the University of Liverpool to ensure that its year zero provision is subject to an appropriate level of external scrutiny [Carmel College]
- liaise with the University of Liverpool with a view to providing a certificate for students who successfully complete their year zero programme but do not progress to further higher education study with the University or elsewhere [Carmel College]
- demonstrate the consistent implementation of the procedures for addressing issues raised in external examiners' interim moderation reports, and ensure that annual monitoring and evaluation reports are compiled correctly [Hertford Regional College]
- discuss with the University of Greenwich a way to ensure that the external examiner's report is made available to College tutors to enable them to make a detailed response and learn from the examiner's overall comments [Hertford Regional College]
- discuss with the University of Hertfordshire how the College and University templates could be amended to ensure that both the positive and negative comments in external examiners' reports are clearly indicated to provide an overall view of the provision [Hertford Regional College]
- the College should more clearly signpost external examiners' reports in the self-assessment process and work with awarding bodies to establish a system for their centralised review [Kingston College]
- access College-specific feedback on the Certificate to teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector and Diploma to teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector from the external examiner, to inform the annual course review and enhance the provision [Thanet College]
- obtain all external examiner feedback for the College's provision from all partner institutions [Walsall College of Arts and Technology]
- discuss with awarding bodies a method for recording formally that external examiners have been given an opportunity to comment on the appropriateness of actions taken as a result of previous reports [Westminster Kingsway College]

Initiatives to promote better management

- establish an effective procedure for the introduction and evaluation of learning initiatives such as the use of anti-plagiarism software which takes into account both the differing needs of programmes and also of their students [Brooklands College]
- introduce a clearer focus on managing higher education within college-wide strategy and planning systems, and a more direct system of reporting on higher education to the Senior Management Group [Huntingdonshire Regional College]
- continue to develop current initiatives to improve attendance, retention and progression in higher education courses [West Hertfordshire College]

Use of management information

- in capturing the views of higher education students, to ease data collation and to enable comparison with the National Student Survey data set for the College, consider an approach that reflects the questions asked, and scaled, within the National Student Survey [Abingdon and Witney College]

- negotiate with the University to disaggregate individual college data from the annual monitoring and external examiner reports so that the College is able to take effective and relevant action for the benefit of College students [Cambridge Regional College]
- ensure that statistical information on progression and achievement is complete and that staff fully understand how it may be used to monitor and analyse student performance [City College Norwich]
- reconsider the way in which statistical data on student achievement is presented and analysed to ensure that the College's academic standards are in accord with the requirements of its validating partners [Hackney Community College]
- carry through the improvements, already identified as being necessary by the College, in tracking the progression of student cohorts in higher education from year to year [Huntingdonshire Regional College]
- ensure that student data, including module outcomes, progression and withdrawals across the programmes, are used systematically to inform annual monitoring [John Kitto College]
- a system should be established for the centralised review of the valuable data arising from a range of student surveys [Kingston College]
- standardise the presentation of its progression data [Lancaster and Morecombe College]
- ensure that it has effective systems and data for the continued monitoring and improvement of retention [Myerscough College]
- seek further measures to interrogate the information available from the National Student Survey on learning resources [North Hertfordshire College]
- provide more detailed, evaluative discussion of the progression, achievement and learner voice data relating to the higher education programmes, and report this discussion fully and accurately in the annual quality review documents [Rotherham College of Arts and Technology]
- obtain cohort progression data on Kingston University programmes regularly and use it to improve the effectiveness of programme review [South Thames College]
- review the template for recording grade review decisions and improve the monitoring of its use across programmes [Sparsholt College]
- clarify the data on which published achievement rates are based and undertake further analyses of these key performance indicators, to ensure a better understanding of the underlying retention and completion patterns within its higher education provision [Swindon College]
- review its systems and procedures to ensure the systematic reporting, analysis and review of trends in cohort retention, progression and achievement data across the programmes [The College of West Anglia]

Policies and strategies for managing higher education

- further develop the advanced lecturer role to promote the enhancement of approaches to teaching and learning in higher education [Abingdon and Witney College]
- establish a formal and transparent procedure for gathering, reporting and responding to issues raised by students in a timely manner [Alton College]
- align the criteria used in the College teaching observation scheme more closely with those used by the awarding bodies [Alton College]
- establish a more explicit, transparent and systematic approach to its management of the higher education provision in order that the specific needs of higher education students are explicitly acknowledged [Alton College]

- consider establishing a specific framework for higher education quality assurance and enhancement which is fully documented to demonstrate that higher education quality issues are fully addressed by the College [Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College]
- consider reviewing the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy in order to articulate a specific higher education focus to support the management of continuing high-quality learning opportunities in the higher education provision [Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College]
- introduce a more formal system to check the accuracy and completeness of public information [Aylesbury College]
- develop the quality assurance procedures to ensure that practice is consistent and effective across all Edexcel programmes [Basingstoke College of Technology]
- develop further its higher education policies and processes, to ensure that they are comprehensive, designed to minimise duplication and associated bureaucracy, aligned with and add value to the awarding bodies' existing documentation and procedures, and serve better the needs of the College's higher education community [Bolton Community College]
- continue to review and develop formal methods for sharing and disseminating good practice across its higher education provision [Bolton Community College]
- explore the possibility of further streamlining its reporting procedures on standards and quality in order to minimise duplication and associated bureaucracy [Bradford College]
- continue to develop the work-based learning policy and ensure that it is embedded across all programmes [Bradford College]
- develop a plan which reflects the College's overarching strategic needs in relation to staff development for the higher education provision [Brockenhurst College]
- establish an effective mechanism for the strategic management of resources in order to support students' learning, ensuring equality of provision [Brooklands College]
- develop and implement clear and consistent structures for the strategic management of, and indicate executive responsibilities for, higher education at college level in order to secure academic standards [Brooklands College]
- develop and implement systems for the strategic management of the differing requirements of the various awarding bodies in order to ensure comparability and equality of the student experience across the College [Brooklands College]
- expedite the completion of the HE Quality Manual and the process of transferring higher education quality assurance documentation to a dedicated place on its website [Calderdale College]
- formalise the receipt and approval of course evaluation reports through, for example, providing minutes of decisions taken in the HE Management Meeting [Calderdale College]
- develop a higher education teaching and learning strategy to help assure the continuing development of the quality of teaching and learning [Carlisle College]
- implement the proposed mechanisms for sharing good practice across the higher education provision to help enhance quality and standards [Carlisle College]
- as the new Higher Education Learning and Teaching Strategy develops, the College should seek to align it with its Higher Education Quality Strategy Policy [Carshalton College]
- consider how best to disseminate all features of good practice identified in its higher education provision [Central Sussex College]
- review its various higher education specific policies to ensure they are appropriate, clear and internally consistent [Chichester College]

Outcomes from IQER: 2008-10

- clarify the procedures for the approval of changes to Edexcel courses and their associated programme specifications, to ensure that they are independent, robust and timely [Chichester College]
- ensure that external examiner reports are shared with students in accordance with HEFCE guidance [Chichester College]
- complete and approve its Higher Education Strategy [City College Coventry]
- produce a document that identifies the quality cycle and reporting arrangements for the management of higher education and enables staff to have a clear understanding of the process [City College Coventry]
- find ways in which a higher education ethos among students could be further encouraged [City College Norwich]
- update the quality manual [College of North West London]
- continue to monitor staffing levels on construction courses [College of North West London]
- continue to monitor its implementation and embedding of its codes of practice for its higher education provision across the institution [Grimsby Institute]
- establish a stronger strategic and overarching steer to embed more fully the higher education strategy across the whole College, with more of an emphasis on a collegiate approach to quality assurance and enhancement [Guildford College of Further and Higher Education]
- develop a higher education focus towards teaching and learning, especially in the context of the planned growth in higher education [Hackney Community College]
- consolidate its quality assurance documentation into a dedicated higher education quality manual, accessible to all staff and students [Hadlow College]
- develop comprehensive readily available written guidance specific to higher education to support the systematic staff implementation of quality assurance procedures and to facilitate the transference of good practice [Henley College, Coventry]
- ensure that the internal processes and procedures for the quality assurance of higher education in the College are more clearly articulated [Hopwood Hall College]
- develop a clear, robust, and consistent approach to the handling of all higher education external examiners' reports as part of an annual higher education self assessment process [Hopwood Hall College]
- develop the College's own monitoring and enhancement processes to encompass its higher education provision, building on the existing partnership-based quality assurance procedures [John Kitto College]
- review its higher education Quality Assurance Policy and processes to make their operation more transparent and to ensure that the timing of the internal and external quality processes between the College and the University are better aligned [Kidderminster College]
- the College should continue the developments towards providing a clearer higher education focus and environment for staff and students including the development of a consistent tutorial policy [Kingston College]
- consider developing and including a version control mechanism on published higher education admissions and performance data prior to internal dissemination [Leeds College of Building]
- review the policy for work-based learning to ensure that consistent arrangements are in place for providing guidance and support for students and mentors [North West Kent College]
- continue to monitor the staffing levels on programmes requiring highly specialised part-time lecturers [Petroc]
- introduce an explicit overarching strategy for the mapping of transferable skills [Reaseheath College]

- develop and implement a College strategy aimed at alleviating the student retention and/or achievement problems in HNC Construction, the combined HND Business and Finance, BA (Hons) Business Management and BA (Hons) Marketing Management programmes, FdA Business and Professional Administration, FD IT for e-Business and FD Sport, Health and Fitness [Richmond upon Thames College]
- design a detailed admissions policy for staff involved with higher education admissions, and ensure that all admissions staff receive relevant training in its implementation [Richmond upon Thames College]
- ensure issues involving communication with link tutors are identified promptly and can be addressed within an academic year [Riverside College Halton]
- consider the quality of the higher education experience of students on programmes with very low numbers [Rotherham College of Arts and Technology]
- develop and confirm the College's e-learning strategy, to enhance further the learning experience of higher education students [Rotherham College of Arts and Technology]
- develop an information technology strategy that provides guiding principles and a framework for the integration of the virtual learning environment with its teaching, learning and assessment policies [Salford College]
- improve the implementation of procedures in the College for ensuring a full response to external examiners' concerns [Somerset College of Arts and Technology]
- clarify how the quality and standards of higher education provision, and the related reporting, will be given a focus within the new college structure [South Leicestershire College]
- revise and update its higher education strategy to provide a more up-to-date view of the provision [South Leicestershire College]
- complete the integration of South Thames College and Merton College quality systems to provide an enhanced oversight of all higher education provision [South Thames College]
- establish a formal reporting route from programme level to senior management through which external examiners' reports and annual monitoring reports are evaluated and action plans produced and monitored [South Worcestershire College]
- establish a system whereby good practice can be shared across the higher education provision [South Worcestershire College]
- continue to develop the distinction between higher and further education in terms of responsibilities for, and reporting on, quality and standards, and formalise and articulate more clearly the management, monitoring and reporting structures and procedures for higher education programmes [Tameside College]
- address as soon as possible the need to ensure a comprehensive and definitive overview of the plans and progress on establishing the College's new suite of higher education policies and procedures [The Sheffield College]
- actively pursue plans to consolidate the various documents currently available on the management of learning resources into a separate policy for the management of learning resources in higher education [The Sheffield College]
- ensure that staff who deliver higher education programmes are fully engaged with the appropriate quality assurance and enhancement activities [Tyne Metropolitan College]
- monitor the content of the Higher Education Good Practice Repository to ensure its currency and integrity [York College]

Internal quality review processes

- take a more evaluative and forward-looking approach, with a more rigorous reporting format, in producing self-assessment reports with an annual development plan for the higher education portfolio; and encourage course teams to take ownership of both the production and ongoing implementation of action plans [Abingdon and Witney College]
- amend the annual College self-assessment report so that the learning opportunities for students on higher education programmes are addressed explicitly [Alton College]
- devise and implement measures that ensure reports contain explicit detail of the issues considered by the programme team, and the actions taken to enhance the provision [Aquinas College]
- ensure that all quality enhancement plans include a signature and date, to provide evidence that the quality loop is closed [Aquinas College]
- devise and implement a system for editing and approving documentation [Aquinas College]
- produce an annual self-evaluation report and associated development plan covering all of its higher education provision [Askham Bryan College]
- the College should review mechanisms so that higher education matters are clearly reported on at all levels of the quality cycle to minimise the potential for higher education issues to be overlooked [Aylesbury College]
- produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education programmes to provide an overview of its provision and facilitate the dissemination of good practice [Brooksby Melton College]
- explore the development and implementation of a mechanism to facilitate the gathering, evaluation and monitoring of sector-wide employer information and the sharing of good practice in employer engagement [Brooksby Melton College]
- carry out a mapping process to link unit and programme outcomes clearly for the Higher National engineering programmes provision [Central Sussex College]
- produce and formally consider a composite report on external examiners' comments for all higher education provision which supports the dissemination of effective practice and identifies issues for staff or policy development [Chichester College]
- ensure that the format of the College self-evaluation document is developed to reflect higher education by including, for example, external examiner reports, course organisers' reports and reports from the awarding bodies [City College Coventry]
- revise the self-assessment review procedure to include an explicit focus on the higher education provision, including, for example, the formal consideration of external examiners' reports [Dearne Valley College]
- adopt a more evaluative approach towards the wording within annual monitoring and subsequent action plans [Hackney Community College]
- monitor carefully the provision of assessment briefs and the feedback arrangements for the return of student work, where new programmes are in the first year of operation, in order to maintain the quality of the student learning experience [Herefordshire College]
- consider how it might highlight matters specific to higher education when it reviews and updates its teaching and learning strategy [Hopwood Hall College]
- evaluate the effectiveness of peer observation of teaching and learning in higher education to ensure that there is a robust means of sharing identified good practice [Huntingdonshire Regional College]

- include references to higher education in its Quality Improvement Plan [Lancaster and Morecombe College]
- review where the Higher Education Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Action Plan are considered in the reporting structure to provide a more effective oversight of the quality assurance of higher education programmes [Lewisham College]
- provide a clear description of the overall annual monitoring process as applied to the higher education provision and include it in the new Higher Education Handbook [Richmond upon Thames College]
- include a specific higher education focus to both the observations policy and the work of the Teaching and Learning Team to help assure the quality of the higher education teaching and learning [Richmond upon Thames College]
- produce an annual monitoring report on its higher education programmes to provide an overview of its provision and to facilitate the dissemination of good practice [South Devon College]
- keep under review the level of resource support for the provision, with particular reference to electronic and printed materials [St Vincent College]
- improve the formal monitoring of quality and standards at module level on Higher National programmes [Tameside College]
- review and implement student feedback mechanisms to obtain more comprehensive data on programme-specific experience [The College of West Anglia]
- actively pursue plans to introduce an annual higher education self-assessment report to help ensure higher education is embedded in the College's management procedures and good practice can be shared across the entire College [The Sheffield College]
- review and monitor the developing situation in the light of any demands placed on resources by higher education developments in the future [Wigan & Leigh College]
- produce the Higher Education Annual Report, to provide a College overview of the annual monitoring cycle, as part of the higher education quality assurance process [York College]

Student involvement in quality management

- consider how the College's arrangements for feedback from students provide an effective way of communicating with them, particularly in reporting back any actions taken as a result of their comments [Bishop Burton College]
- consider ways of more effectively communicating feedback to students from questionnaires conducted by Anglia Ruskin University [Cambridge Regional College]
- develop clear guidance for staff and students about the ways in which student feedback is gathered, responded to and acted upon [City College Coventry]
- review the policy for capturing the higher education student voice and consider its inclusion as part of the wider approach towards the annual self-assessment of the provision [Hackney Community College]
- consider ways to ensure that the action taken in response to student feedback is communicated to them more effectively and directly [Hertford Regional College]
- formalise feedback systems and ensure students are informed of the actions taken by the College in response to issues they have raised [Lakes College]
- ensure that matters raised through feedback are minuted and tracked more consistently, with actions, including communication back to those who have raised issues, clearly demonstrated within standard course reporting documentation [Loughborough College]

Outcomes from IQER: 2008-10

- consider the helpful recommendations made in the students' written submission, which included: highlighting the dates of the two student forum meetings at induction; providing training for College programme representatives on their role; setting up an e-forum which would encourage part-time students to become involved in feedback, and to use this to display minutes of the meetings so that students can follow the progress of their input [Petroc]
- build on the comprehensive and highly committed approach to gathering student evaluations by demonstrating how these have been used to enhance the provision [South Worcestershire College]
- make more use of the comments of students, external examiners and other parties in the programme review process and encourage programme teams to be more consistently evaluative in their reporting [Tameside College]
- develop an effective means for gathering, and acting upon, student feedback at module and programme level and ensure that this is embedded in consistent practice across the programme [The City Literary Institute]
- capture end-of-module/unit student feedback to aid in evaluating the continuing effectiveness of the curriculum and of assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes at module/unit level [Walsall College of Arts and Technology]
- ensure that actions taken to address issues raised in student satisfaction feedback forms are communicated to the students on a formal basis [Wirral Metropolitan College]
- include student representation on the Higher Education Strategy Group to enable student views to inform its discussions about academic standards and quality [Carlisle College].

Appendix C: Methodology used for producing papers in *Outcomes from IQER*

For each published Summative review report, the text of bullet points of good practice and recommendations identified by the review team is taken from section E, Conclusions and summary of judgements. The bullet points are incorporated into a spreadsheet and coded to a series of top-level themes:

- Academic Infrastructure
- Assessment
- Employer engagement
- Public information
- Quality management
- Staff development
- Student experience
- Student engagement.

Each bullet point text is then coded to a series of more detailed topics within each theme. This enables areas of good practice and recommendations to be sorted and analysed. The paragraph references in the main text of this paper refer to section B of the Summative review report, where the examples of good practice and recommendations are discussed in more detail and in the context of the individual college.

Individual *Outcomes* papers are written by experienced IQER reviewers and coordinators. To assist in compiling the papers, authors are able to use the spreadsheet of bullet points to establish a broad picture of the overall distribution of features of good practice and recommendations in particular areas, as seen by the review teams. They then consider this information in the context of the more detailed discussion in the main text of the Summative review reports.

Appendix D: The IQER reports

2008-09

Alton College
Askham Bryan College
Bolton Community College
Calderdale College
Carshalton College
Central Sussex College
Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education
Henley College Coventry
Herefordshire College of Technology
Huntingdonshire Regional College
Kingston College
Lakes College
Loughborough College
Nelson and Colne College
North Hertfordshire College
Richmond upon Thames College
South Tyneside College
Sparsholt College
Swindon College
Thanet College
The City Literary Institute (City Lit)
West Hertfordshire College
Wigan and Leigh College
York College

2009-10

Abingdon and Witney College
Aquinas College
Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College
Aylesbury College
Basingstoke College of Technology
Birkenhead Sixth Form College
Bishop Burton College
Boston College
Bradford College
Bridgwater College
Brockenhurst College
Brooklands College
Brooksby Melton College
Cambridge Regional College
Canterbury College
Capel Manor College
Carlisle College
Carmel College
Chelmsford College
Chichester College

City College Coventry
City College Norwich
City of Bristol College
College of North West London
Croydon College
Dearne Valley College
Derwentside College
Dudley College of Technology
Guildford College of Further and Higher Education
Hackney Community College
Hadlow College
Havering College of Further and Higher Education
Hereford College of Arts
Hertford Regional College
Highbury College Portsmouth
Hopwood Hall College
John Kitto College
Kidderminster College
King George V College
Lancaster and Morecambe College
Leeds College of Building
Lewisham College
Myerscough College
Newcastle College
Newham Sixth Form College
North West Kent College of Technology
Petroc
Reaseheath College
Riverside College Halton
Rotherham College of Arts and Technology
Salford College
Somerset College of Arts and Technology
South Devon College
South Downs College
South Leicestershire College
South Thames College
South Worcestershire College
Southampton City College
St Vincent College
Tameside College
The College of West Anglia
The Sheffield College
Tyne Metropolitan College
Walsall College
Westminster Kingsway College
Wirral Metropolitan College

The full Summative review reports can be found at
www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Pages/Institutions-A-Z.aspx.

Appendix E: Titles of papers in *Outcomes from IQER*

Papers to be published in 2011:

- *College management of higher education*
- *Staff development.*

Forthcoming papers to be based on the Summative review reports for reviews carried out in 2010-11:

- *Assessment*
- *The student voice.*

All published *Outcomes* papers can be found at

www.qaa.ac.uk/ImprovingHigherEducation/Pages/Outcomes-IQER.aspx.

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