QAA

Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

May 2010

Cambridge Regional College

SR88/2010

Preface

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education.

As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

Purpose of IQER

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

The IQER process

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

Developmental engagement

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college

- an optional written submission by the student body

- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit

- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days

- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education

- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams, however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents

- reviewing the optional written submission from students

- asking questions of relevant staff

- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications

- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*

- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects

- *Guidelines for preparing programme specifications*, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study

- award benchmark statements, which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential, advisable** and **desirable.** To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.

- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence, limited confidence** or **no confidence.** There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published.

Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body(ies) as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

Executive summary

The Summative review of Cambridge Regional College carried out in May 2010

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreement, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding body. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreement, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Good practice

The team has identified the following good practice for dissemination:

- 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

- College-derived monitoring processes, including student evaluations, supplement the aggregated information supplied by Anglia Ruskin University

- FdA Early Years Childcare students on work placements are provided with a high level of support by the mentor system and the mentor handbook.

Recommendations

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

The team considers that it would be **advisable** for the College to:

- 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.

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

- consider ways of more effectively communicating feedback to students from questionnaires conducted by Anglia Ruskin University

- consider introducing workplace mentoring and handbooks for its FdSc Built Environment students, similar to those used on the FdA Early Years Childcare, to ensure consistency and efficiency in the student learning experience

- monitor module handbooks for consistency and accuracy to ensure parity across all programmes

- work with the University to ensure that College students and staff receive information in a timely manner, particularly assessment information, in order for College students not to be disadvantaged, some of whom attend College only one day a week

- work with the University to ensure that reference is made to the College's higher education programmes on the University's website.

A Introduction and context

1   This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Cambridge Regional College. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of Anglia Ruskin University. The review was carried out by Mrs Claire Blanchard and Mr Millard Parkinson (reviewers) and Dr Marion Shaw (coordinator).

2   The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College and awarding body, meetings with staff, students, and a representative from the partner institution, reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (*Code of practice*), subject and award benchmark statements, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and programme specifications.

3   In order to assist HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree (FD) awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the FD programmes delivered at the College.

4   Cambridge Regional College is a large general further education college primarily serving the Cambridge sub-region with a radius of 35 miles. It has approximately 1,000 staff and a total of 15,000 students, of whom 96 (49 full-time equivalents) are studying for higher education awards. All the College's higher education students are part-time and the College sees itself as offering this niche provision to students who are employed in the construction industry and the early years care profession. The College consolidated its estate onto the Kings Hedges Science Park Campus in the summer of 2009. The College is divided into seven academies for each subject area. Higher education provision is contained in the Academy of Construction and the Academy of Care, Health & Early Years.

5   The higher education provision is accredited by Anglia Ruskin University. The College has been an associate of the University since 1993. It formerly ran a larger portfolio of higher education provision but retrenched due to financial constraints and in order not to duplicate Anglia Ruskin programmes. However, the College hopes to introduce a change of strategy to expand its higher education provision in the future, particularly in the areas of public services and the care profession. This aspiration depends on clear market demand and negotiation with Anglia Ruskin University to avoid duplication of provision.

6   The higher education awards funded indirectly by HEFCE are listed below, beneath the awarding body and with full-time equivalent numbers of students for 2009-10:

Anglia Ruskin University

HNC Construction   (6)

HND Construction   (0)

FdSc Built Environment   (22)

FdA Early Years Childcare   (21)

Partnership agreements with the awarding body

7   All higher education programmes at the College are accredited by Anglia Ruskin University, including HNC and HND programmes. The University provides the College with all regulatory information and also all programme specification and assessment documentation, along with a student handbook. The College supplements this documentation where appropriate, including module handbooks and information on the College website and in prospectuses. Under the terms of the agreement, College students have access to a range of resources, including learning resources, at the University. The Developmental engagement suggested that it would be advisable for information, such as eternal examiner reports, to be disaggregated by the University in order to be of specific benefit to College students and staff. Although not yet fully implemented, the University has committed itself to a process of appropriate disaggregation.

Recent developments in higher education at the College

8   In response to HEFCE requirements, the College has introduced a higher education strategy, which includes reporting higher education matters to the College Corporation. The University's Curriculum Management Committee may also be enlarged to include senior managers from the College. This is considered desirable if the College is to realise its aspirations to expand its higher education provision.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

9   Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. The College provided a list of 10 questions and a representative group of students subsequently submitted written replies. The respondents were drawn from all three years of provision and from the two subject areas under review. The submission was helpful to the team and some of the issues raised were taken up in the meeting with students during the review visit. No students were present at the preparatory meeting.

B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education

Core theme 1: Academic standards

How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?

10 The responsibility for managing standards, according to the University Senate Code of Practice on collaborative provision, rests with the awarding body, although the day-to-day management of provision is the responsibility of the College. Following a recent directive

from HEFCE the College has produced a higher education strategy. This is implemented through line management structures, with an independent quality assurance cycle within the College to monitor academic standards. The head of each academy reports through an Assistant Principal and Vice Principal to the Learning and Achievement Committee, which is a subcommittee of the College Corporation. This committee reviews higher education provision only in exceptional circumstances. This effective monitoring and reporting structure for higher education provision, which now includes monitoring by the College Corporation, and thus enhances the status of higher education in the College, is good practice. These internal processes support, and feed into, the University's academic management practices, with the University's Curriculum Management Committee as the reporting venue.

11   The University exercises its responsibility for the oversight, maintenance and enhancement of academic standards in the College, and the standards of its awards, through faculty boards and Senate. Senate has overall responsibility for all quality assurance procedures, including those for the approval and modification of pathways, annual monitoring, periodic reviews, and institutional review and audit. These procedures are agreed with the College and are published in the Senate Code of Practice on The Approval, Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review of Taught Pathways.

12   Pathways approved for delivery in the College are subject to periodic review every five years, where major changes may be made. Any proposed minor modifications to pathways are agreed through the University's formal mechanisms as set out in the Senate Code of Practice. The College is involved with the University in departmental assessment panels. These determine and confirm academic standards, and review and approve or amend marks awarded as part of the assessment process. The team saw samples of student work and confirmed that this is at the expected level of achievement. Overall, the management and delivery of standards is effectively delegated within the College, acting in partnership with the University.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

13   The College does not provide specific training on the Academic Infrastructure as it is embedded in the guidance provided to the College by the University, and constitutes the framework within which the College operates its higher education programmes. The team saw examples of programme specifications, which demonstrate the College's use of the *Code of practice* published by QAA and also the relevant benchmark statements.

How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?

14   The primary mechanism for programme monitoring and evaluation is the annual monitoring report provided by the University. Although the College contributes to the drafting of this, the team found that the final report does not identify partner-specific issues. It cannot, therefore, easily be monitored independently through the College's quality assurance cycle. The same is true of external examiner reports, which are not disaggregated for partner institutions and are therefore of limited use for College staff. The team considers that it would be advisable for the College to 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.

15   In spite of the non-specific nature of the annual monitoring report, programme teams at the College, having identified areas of strength and areas for development, use the report as a prompt to address these issues. This includes their own methods, either verbal or written, for gathering student feedback. Programme teams also respond in the same positive way to external examiner feedback, although copies of these reports are not always reliably received by the College and do not identify partner performance weaknesses or strengths. The team considers that College-derived monitoring processes, including student evaluations, which supplement the aggregated information supplied by Anglia Ruskin University constitute good practice.

16   In addition to the annual monitoring report, a formal termly monitoring of higher education has been introduced, largely as a consequence of recommendations from the Developmental engagement. This monitoring comprises a higher education performance and business review, with staff from the relevant academies. Among other matters, the review has considered progress on Developmental engagement recommendations, student feedback, recruitment, and forthcoming priorities. Hitherto, higher education had not undergone monitoring separate from all other programmes in the College.

17   The College's Learning and Achievement Committee, a subcommittee of the Corporation, is responsible for monitoring the quality of learning and receives, for example, copies of reports from external bodies, such as Ofsted and QAA. Due to the size of the higher education provision, however, the Committee does not routinely review the quality of higher education programmes separately. The College participates fully in relevant University committees, for example the Partnership Committee, which is designed to support and develop effective relationships and foster good working practices between the two organisations.

18   Evaluation using student opinion is embedded in curriculum management practices. Examples include the use of University-prescribed module evaluation forms and College-specific student questionnaires and discussion groups. College students commented that the University had not always fed back to them the results of the evaluation. The team considers that it would be desirable for the College to consider ways of more effectively communicating feedback to students from questionnaires conducted by Anglia Ruskin University.

What are the College's arrangements for staff development to support the achievement of appropriate academic standards?

19   Arrangements for staff development, particularly around teaching and learning, are extensive, and include supportive and objective lesson observations, including peer observation. Continuous professional development includes five professional development days, the content and timing of which are negotiated with line managers. Staff are encouraged to attend professional seminars and relevant vocational opportunities. Extensive centralised College briefing includes participation in training provided by the University, such as annual monitoring review training and network discipline groups. The Curriculum Management Committee provides ongoing staff development from University staff as and when required to promote knowledge and understanding of these policies. No specific, distinctive higher education training is arranged by the College.

The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities as set out in its partnership agreements, for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.

Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities

How are responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities for higher education programmes delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?

20 The termly monitoring review (see paragraph 16) covers all aspects of higher education learning and teaching. Each programme completes an annual monitoring report as prescribed in the University Senate Code of Practice on The Approval, Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review of Taught Pathways. This is then combined with reports from other colleges to provide generic reports covering all partner colleges offering the same University programmes. The College contributes to the drafting of this report, which does not identify partner-specific issues.

21 The College has a teaching and learning strategy but this is designed for 14-19 year-old learners. All partner colleges delivering University programmes are subject to institutional review, which monitors the colleges' appropriate levels of teaching and learning, their resources, academic standards and quality of learning opportunities. The report for the College for March 2010 recommended continuation of the partnership for a further five years subject to a number of conditions. One of these was that the College should work with the University to implement a Curriculum Review Committee to ensure that a dedicated mechanism for higher education student feedback is formalised. This has now been established with terms of reference; the first meeting took place in April 2010.

How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding body to ensure that students receive appropriate learning opportunities?

22 The University's institutional review reports, completed as part of the Senate Code of Practice on Collaborative Provision and the Code of Practice on The Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Taught Pathways, examine the level of academic standards and the necessary quality of education provided for students to achieve those standards. Delivery of higher education programmes by the College depends on successful approval and continuous monitoring by this process. Module evaluations, annual monitoring reports and external examiner reports are received by the University and examined at appropriate programme and faculty level to identify issues and areas of good practice. An overview and action plan are produced from these reports; the University monitors progress against the plan.

23 The College complies with regulations and guidelines set out in the University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Overview document. College module tutors complete module report forms, which are forwarded to the University module leader, who compiles the results onto one form for use at the University Programme Committee. A variety of methods is used by the College to disseminate results to students, including one-to-one discussions, tutorials and posters.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

24 For engagement with the Academic Infrastructure, see paragraph 13. The Head of Quality Assurance at the University has delivered a staff development session on the Academic Infrastructure to College staff to ensure they are aware and take account of it. Some assignment briefs for the FdSc Built Environment are produced by College staff with due reference to the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*.

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

25 The College operates three methods of observation of teaching: formal, developmental and peer. All College full-time staff and an alternating 50 per cent of staff teaching 10 hours per week or more are observed formally on an annual basis and graded according to a standard observation scheme. Staff teaching on higher education programmes are observed by managers with higher education experience. Staff teaching observation profiles indicate that all staff are at least satisfactory. Measures are in place to identify areas for improvement at observations, which are linked to staff appraisal and continuing professional development. This process is monitored by the Curriculum Quality Leader. Developmental observations are usually carried out by programme leaders; peer observations are carried out between staff in associated disciplines. Good practice from all observations is disseminated through informal discussions, team meetings, the virtual learning environment, and by staff demonstrating proficiency in particular skills to colleagues.

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

26 The College provides a comprehensive level of support for students. Programme staff work closely with the Study Support Unit. Students are offered the opportunity for diagnostic testing at induction and can be referred for this by programme staff. Results of this testing identify individual needs, which are then met through one hour per week support sessions, or as required. All students undertake a written screening test to identify possible support needs. The Study Support Unit has copies of all modules and can develop support to meet these specific needs.

27 The level of support provided to FdA Early Years Childcare students when on work placement is noteworthy. Students spoke highly of the mentoring system, which provides them with reassurance and guidance, and which is supplemented by a handbook. The team considers the level of support provided to FdA Early Years Childcare students on work placements by the mentor system and the mentor handbook to be good practice. Support for students on construction programmes is more variable and it would be desirable for the College to consider introducing workplace mentoring and handbooks for its FdSc Built Environment students, similar to those used on the FdA Early Years Childcare, to ensure consistency and efficiency in the student learning experience.

28 It is a condition of approval for delivery by the University that the College engage a student adviser for higher education. This is the only person who can approve extensions to assessment deadlines. This adviser is also involved in the assessment of students' support needs and can advise students on help they may be entitled to, including applications for Disability Support Allowance. Students expressed general satisfaction with levels of support they receive and also the ease of access to College staff, who are able to provide appropriate information, advice and guidance.

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

29 For information on staff development, please refer to paragraph 19. All staff undertake a minimum of 30 hours per year of professional development activities, as specified in their membership of the Institute for Learning. The College does not have a scholarly activity policy but programme staff undertake staff development specific to higher education which is outside the 30-hour allocation.

How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?

30 Adequate resources to deliver provision to appropriate standards for students is monitored as part of the University's approval and review processes. College staff are involved in the planning and acquisition of resources for their programmes, including resources for the Learning Resource Centre and specialist information technology packages. Students noted a recent improvement in materials in the Learning Resource Centre, although construction students felt that access to specialist computer-assisted design and digital learning resources was too limited in their one day per week in College. Improved distribution of digital resources is being investigated by programme managers. Students can, however, download appropriate design packages free of cost. College students have access to resources at the University and can order resources from different University sites.

The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities as required by the awarding bodies to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Core theme 3: Public information

What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?

31 The University has responsibility for publishing all information on HEFCE-funded higher education. The University provides the College with accurate and detailed information to help students to understand their programme, the support available and the services provided by the University. Students confirmed that they have access to the undergraduate student handbook from the University's website. This document contains regulations and guidance relating to academic appeals, generic assessment criteria, behaviour in assessment, plagiarism, extensions and mitigating circumstances. Students confirmed that they also receive a copy of the assessment regulations as part of induction.

32 Programme handbooks summarise the information found in the University's pathway specification. Module handbooks and study guides are produced by the University and contain details that are relevant to College students. In some cases the module handbooks contain the required assessment detail; in other cases, the assessment briefs are separately distributed at different times. The team considers that it would be desirable for the College to monitor the module handbooks for consistency and accuracy to ensure parity across all programmes. Students also receive module guides, which contain a copy of the Module Definition Form, which specifies the nature of the assessment and the deadlines for submission. Much of the information relating to assessment can be found either on the University internet or on the College's virtual learning environment, for ease of access. Where this is not yet the case, it is the College's intention to move to an electronic version of all documents to supplement the paper copies.

33 Assignment briefs are usually produced by the University and distributed to College students in paper or electronic form. This ensures consistency across all partners delivering the same modules. Students have most of these at the start of each semester. Some briefs for the FdSc Built Environment are produced by College staff and are moderated by the University. This ensures parity for students across all delivery locations, including the College. The team found that the timing of the issuing of information between the University-based students and the College students is not always consistent and potentially disadvantages College students. For example, examination papers were not released to the

College until May, a date convenient for University students but not necessarily so for College students whose part-time attendance is less regular. The team considers that it would be desirable for the College to work with the University to ensure that College students and staff receive information in a timely manner, particularly assessment information, in order for College students not to be disadvantaged, some of whom attend College only one day a week.

34   The College is responsible for publishing its prospectuses for full and part-time provision. These contain information on all further education programmes, with brief details of higher education programmes included at the end of each subject section and identified as level 4 and 5 provision, which makes it difficult to identify. As the College does not recruit through the Universities and Colleges Admission Service, there is no information about its higher education provision on this website.

What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing? How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?

35   The College adheres to the guidelines and protocols issued by the University for the marketing and promotion of its pathways. The University retains the right to approve and monitor all advertising and promotional material relating to its pathways and awards. It provides the College with appropriate and up-to-date versions of promotional material including the crest and logo. The University also provides protocols and guidelines regarding the use of the crest and logo by the College and stating when their use is optional and when it is an expectation. This is monitored by the Faculty Liaison Group/ Partnership Liaison Group. However, the College as a partner does not appear in the part-time prospectus published on the University's website. The team recommends as desirable that the College work with the University to ensure that reference is made to the College's higher education programmes on the University website.

36   The College publicises its higher education provision through its own website, where courses are promoted by occupational sector, or by course level, including Foundation Degrees. The self-evaluation states that processes for checking and approving public information are not formalised, although checks occur locally within the College. The team found that there are appropriate checks for approving public information carried out by teaching and marketing staff, and staff from the data team and the Study Support Unit.

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

C   Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment

37   The Developmental engagement in assessment took place on 10 and 11 February 2009. The lines of enquiry were as follows: How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling the requirements of the awarding body in relation to assessment? To what extent is feedback to students on assessment effective, rigorous and fair? How far is information provided to students about the assessment process comprehensive, consistent, clear and accurate? The College offered three programmes: FdSc Construction, HNC Construction, and FdA Early Years Childcare and Education. The awarding body for all programmes was Anglia Ruskin University.

38 Good practice was identified as the itemised feedback in some construction modules, which enabled students to understand how they could improve. Construction students also received a customised manual on the requirements of report writing, which provided a valuable guide for students unfamiliar with this form of writing. In the early years programme, good practice was identified as the high level of support students received, which included flexible assessment in the context of the students' working lives; and an end-of-semester feedback which looked to the next stage of the programme as well as providing retrospective commentary.

39 Recommendations were largely concerned with the need for the College to work with Anglia Ruskin University to achieve disaggregated information so that it could be of specific value to the College's management of its quality. This included information from external examiner reports and departmental assessment panels. A greater visibility of College information on the University's documentation and an increased awareness of College students' needs in this respect was also considered desirable. There were also recommendations for assignment briefs to contain intended learning outcomes and grading criteria, and for feedback in the construction programmes to be consistent across all modules. This last recommendation has now been implemented.

D Foundation Degrees

40 Cambridge Regional College currently offers two Foundation Degrees:

- FdSc Built Environment   (22 FTEs)

- FdA Early Years Childcare (21 FTEs)

41 The Foundation Degrees are validated by Anglia Ruskin University. The College has been an associate of the University since 1993. It formerly ran a larger portfolio of higher education provision but retrenched due to financial constraints and in order not to duplicate Anglia Ruskin programmes. However, the College hopes to introduce a change of strategy to expand its higher education provision to include more Foundation Degrees, particularly in the areas of public services and the care profession. This aspiration depends on clear market demand and negotiation with Anglia Ruskin University to avoid duplication of provision.

42 Recruitment to the Foundation Degrees is healthy, with the potential for further growth. The team found student work to be at an appropriate level and the students generally very satisfied with the provision. All higher education students are part-time and in employment and the College successfully integrates theoretical learning with practical experience in the workplace. Workplace mentoring, particularly in the FdA Early Years Childcare, is monitored and supported effectively.

43 All points of good practice and recommendations listed in the conclusion and summary of judgements apply to Foundation Degrees provided by Cambridge Regional College.

E Conclusions and summary of judgements

44 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Cambridge Regional College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding body, Anglia Ruskin University.

45   In the course of the review, the team identified the following areas of **good practice**:

- 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 (paragraph 10)

- College-derived monitoring processes, including student evaluations, supplement the aggregated information supplied by Anglia Ruskin University (paragraph 15)

- FdA Early Years Childcare students on work placements are provided with a high level of support by the mentor system and the mentor handbook (paragraph 27).

46   The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding body.

47   The team agreed one area where the college is **advised** to take action:

- 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 (paragraph 14).

48   The team also agreed the following areas where it would be **desirable** for the College to take action:

- consider ways of more effectively communicating feedback to students from questionnaires conducted by Anglia Ruskin University (paragraph 18)

- consider introducing workplace mentoring and handbooks for its FdSc Built Environment students, similar to those used on the FdA Early Years Childcare, to ensure consistency and efficiency in the student learning experience (paragraph 27)

- monitor module handbooks for consistency and accuracy to ensure parity across all programmes (paragraph 32)

- work with the University to ensure that College students and staff receive information in a timely manner, particularly assessment information, in order for College students not to be disadvantaged, some of whom attend College only one day a week (paragraph 33)

- work with the University to ensure that reference is made to the College's higher education programmes on the University's website (paragraph 35).

49   Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

50   Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

51   Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Cambridge Regional College action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the 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 (paragraph 10)	Continue to carry out reporting to the Corporation for HE programmes	July 2010	Vice Principal	Corporation remain satisfied with HE reporting arrangements	N/A	Corporation to review reporting arrangements in line with governance review timescales, to be determined by new Principal
• College-derived monitoring processes, including student evaluations, supplement the aggregated information supplied by Anglia Ruskin University (paragraph 15)	To withdraw College monitoring arrangements once Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) are able to disaggregate	July 2011	Vice Principal	No supplementary monitoring necessary	Curriculum Monitoring Committee (CMC)	N/A once ARU reporting issues resolved – monitor but no need to evaluate further

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Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	performance data for the College				.	
• FdA Early Years Childcare students on work placements are provided with a high level of support by the mentor system and the mentor handbook (paragraph 27)	Share handbook with FdSc via CMC	September 2011	Programme Leader Early Years	Handbook/ processes adopted/ adapted, or alternative derived	CMC	Via self-assessment

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Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed one area where the College should be **advised** to take action:						
• negotiate with the University to disaggregate the 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 (paragraph 14)	Discuss with Academic Office at ARU; College HE Co-ordinator to contact Head of Quality Assurance in October annually to request annual monitoring data reports for college courses External examiner reports: ARU has amended the annual report template to make explicit the requirement for external examiners to comment on assessment processes and outcomes by location	Dec 10	College HE Co-ordinator	Useable data available from ARU in timely manner	CMC	Self-assessment

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Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed the following areas where it would be **desirable** to take action:						
• consider ways of more effectively communicating feedback to students from questionnaires conducted by Anglia Ruskin University (paragraph 18)	Await outcomes of introduction of new electronic system of module evaluation from September 2010; ARU advises that distribution of module evaluation will be more timely than under the previous paper-based system	End of first semester, January 2011	Academic Office, ARU and course leaders at Cambridge Regional College – ie re the dissemination of outcomes	Course level data/info discussed with students	CMC	Self assessment
	As per 'good practice' section of this plan	As per 'good practice' section of this plan	As per 'good practice' section of this plan	As per 'good practice' section of this plan	As per 'good practice' section of this plan	As per 'good practice' section of this plan
• consider introducing workplace mentoring and handbooks for its FdSc Built Environment students, similar to	As per 'good practice' section of this plan					

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Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
those used on the FdA Early Years Childcare, to ensure consistency and efficiency in the student learning experience (paragraph 27)						
• monitor module handbooks for consistency and accuracy to ensure parity across all programmes (paragraph 32)	Discuss with ARU – difference of opinion on where responsibility lies	September 10	College HE Co-ordinator and ARU's Academic Office	Responsibilities assigned and actions taken	CMC	Self-assessment
• work with the University to ensure that College students and staff receive information in a timely manner, particularly assessment information, in order for College students not to be disadvantaged, some of whom attend College only one day a week (paragraph 33)	Achieved through negotiation and monitoring, which is to be continued	CMC 1 January 2011	Vice Principal	All information received in a timely manner	CMC	No need for further evaluation as monitoring will manage progress

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Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• work with the University to ensure that reference is made to the College's higher education programmes on the University's website (paragraph 35)	Requests submitted to ARU - awaiting action	August 2010	ARU	Cambridge Regional College provision visible on website	CMC	No further evaluation – monitor annually