



Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

Runshaw College

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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 Runshaw College carried out in February 2011

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:

- the implementation of the Professional Development Policy ensures that the delivery of the provision is supported effectively by staff development
- the College has very effective procedures for the assurance and enhancement of learning and teaching, which provide students with a high quality learning experience
- the College has a large range of effective student support procedures, which students value highly and which result in very high retention and achievement rates
- work-based learning with effective employer engagement on the Foundation Degrees is of a high standard and enhances students' appreciation of the world of work
- students benefit from specialised documents like the Handbook and Diary and 'Stop, Look and Listen' guides, which provide student-friendly and detailed guidance on key aspects of programme delivery.

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:

- ensure that any audit undertaken is effective in supporting the monitoring and enhancement of the provision and as a method for responding to student concerns
- develop the virtual learning environment both as a source of current information and as an aid to learning and teaching to enhance the quality of the student experience.

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

- ensure that all students receive feedback in a timely manner to help them with future assessments
- consult with the University of Central Lancashire, within the context of the partnership agreement, to ensure that all students receive module information packs of a high quality.

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 Runshaw College (the 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 the University of Central Lancashire. The review was carried out by Mr Tom Cantwell, Ms Viki Faulkner, Dr Hayley Randle (reviewers) and Dr Peter Steer (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, separate meetings with staff, including awarding body representatives, employers and students, the student written submission, QAA review reports and Ofsted reports. 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 Runshaw College is a further and higher education college serving the communities of South Ribble and Chorley in central Lancashire. It was established in 1974 as a sixth form centre. The College mission is to 'deliver educational excellence through outstanding teaching and learning, in a caring, supportive environment where the student always comes first'. The College has developed significantly in scale and scope, covering most of the further education vocational areas. In 2009-10 student enrolment was approximately 9,700. Enrolment for 2010-11 is still continuing and is likely to be approximately the same. The College operates on three campuses: Langdale Road in Leyland, Euxton Lane in Euxton, and the Market Street Centre in Chorley. All campuses are within a three-mile radius of the Euxton Lane campus, where most of the higher education provision is based. Some specialist resources, like sport and science laboratories and engineering workshops, are located at Langdale Road. Some modules on the FdA Early Years Education and Care and FdA Integrated Education and Care of Children and Young People are taught at the Wigan Childcare Services Professional Development Centre at Hindley near Wigan. This off-site provision includes both full-time and part-time students.

5 There are four faculties, all with higher education provision: Arts and Humanities, Professional Studies and Skills, Science and Technology, and 19+ (Adult and Higher Education and the Runshaw Business Centre). Of the 23 schools at the College, 11 currently offer higher education programmes. Two other schools have validated programmes which are currently not being delivered. Two more schools will have higher education provision from September 2011, following the validation of bachelor's degrees in Law with Criminology and in Mathematics. For 2010-11 enrolment is 580 full-time equivalents, of whom 483 are full-time and 175 are part-time. In 2009-10 enrolment was 485 full-time equivalents consisting of 377 full-time and 210 part-time students. All students are indirectly funded

through the University of Central Lancashire. The higher education provision offered by the College is as follows (full-time equivalent student numbers are in brackets):

University of Central Lancashire

- BA (Hons) Care, Community and Citizenship (first year only) (10)
- BA (Hons) Criminology & Criminal Justice (first year only) (30)
- BSc (Hons) Psychology (first year only) (27)
- BSc (Hons) Science (Foundation Entry) (23)
- Certificate in Education/Post Graduate Certificate in Education (55.42)
- Certificate in Introduction to Higher Education (9.57)
- FdA Business (42.98)
- FdA Early Years Education and Care (45.24)
- FdA Fine Art (9)
- FdA Games Design (4)
- FdA Graphic Design (31)
- FdA Integrated Education and Care of Children and Young People (57.82)
- FdA Public Services (41)
- FdA Sports Coaching (33)
- FdA Tourism and Events Management (32)
- FdSc Computer Aided Engineering (22)
- FdSc Computing (13)
- FdSc Computer Games Development (16)
- FdSc Computer Technology (27.64)
- FdSc Forensic Science (13)
- FdSc Sport and Exercise Science (26.66)
- HNC Business (10.56).

Partnership agreements with the awarding body

6 The College works closely with the University of Central Lancashire (the University), based on a clear and detailed partnership agreement which specifies the responsibilities of each institution. Where a programme is delivered solely by the College, staff liaise directly with the University to develop, verify and moderate assessments. The University appoints the external examiners and requires a detailed annual report on each programme. Three programmes have received additional student numbers from the Lancashire Lifelong Learning Network and are subject to similar quality assurance procedures. The partnership agreement puts the main responsibility on the College to provide the resources to support learning, although it provides for extensive access to University facilities.

Recent developments in higher education at the College

7 The College has been successful in obtaining additional student numbers, in part through the Lancashire Lifelong Learning Network, as well as directly from the University of Central Lancashire. There has been considerable growth in every year since 2005-06. Enrolment in 2005-06 was 173.5 full-time equivalents.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

8 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team and did so in November 2010. Student representatives were invited to four focus groups, supported by a member of the College

staff. Thirty-one students from a broad spectrum of programmes attended the meetings. Some of those who could not be present also provided comments. Students met the team during the review and also contributed to the preparatory meeting. The team found all the students' contributions useful.

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?

9 The College has clear, well established and well integrated systems for managing and delivering higher education, based on its partnership agreement with the University of Central Lancashire. There are clearly identified lines of reporting both within the College and to the University. The College has adopted a college-wide approach to quality improvement. Best practice systems from further education, which have been recognised by Ofsted, are also used in higher education, for example a strong focus on attendance and regular student progress reviews.

10 The College has adopted a matrix management system. Management of higher education courses is embedded within curriculum areas covering both further and higher education. Curriculum improvement teams are responsible to heads of school, who oversee the delivery of academic standards. Heads of studies for higher education have a cross-college responsibility for the management of academic standards. This includes an overview of consistent practice across programmes and all aspects of quality enhancement. Heads of studies work closely with staff in the schools and chair several committees concerned with higher education. Both the heads of school and the heads of studies report to the senior management team.

11 The senior management team receives regular reports on higher education, informed by a number of committees with a higher education focus, from the Assistant Principal responsible for higher education and adult learning. The College Principal and Assistant Principal report on higher education to the Corporation. The team considered that generally management procedures are effective.

12 A management response to some student comment in the 'suggested areas for improvement' section provided as part of the student written submission was an audit of its virtual learning environment. It was also part of the response to the Developmental engagement recommendation that it should extend the use of the virtual learning environment by staff and students. The College made the results of the audit available to the team. However, the design of the audit did not enable it to identify the significant amounts of out-of-date material. In a significant aspect, the audit was ineffective. The team considers it advisable that the College ensure that any audit undertaken is effective in supporting the monitoring and enhancement of the provision and as a method for responding to student concerns.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

13 Staff have an active and effective engagement with the Academic Infrastructure. All course handbooks contain programme specifications. The College has mapped effectively its processes and policies concerning academic standards to the relevant

sections of the *Code of practice*. It has responded effectively to the recommendation of the Developmental engagement concerning the use of the Academic Infrastructure. For example, there have been professional development sessions and a concentration on the Academic Infrastructure in periodic programme reviews.

14 Where the College has been responsible for new course design, such as the FdA Tourism and Events Management, the curriculum is informed by discussion with employers and aligned with *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*.

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?

15 The College has a long and well established relationship with the University of Central Lancashire. The University confirms that the College is clear about its obligations of cooperation and that it has no concerns about its ability to ensure the standards of its programmes.

16 Processes for ensuring the standards of assessment are effective and include robust systems of internal verification and moderation on all programmes. These ensure that all aspects of assessment are closely linked to the intended learning outcomes. External examiner reports confirm that student work is of an appropriate academic standard. External examiner reports are considered in detail within the College and appropriate action initiated. The quality of feedback to students is generally very high. On a small number of programmes, for example the FdSc Forensic Science, there has been a delay in the return of feedback to students. More timely feedback would help students in future assessments. The team considers it desirable to ensure that all students receive feedback in a timely manner to help them with future assessments.

17 The College has established a comprehensive and effective annual higher education quality assurance procedure. Staff produce module reports informed by student feedback and achievement data. Course leaders work with heads of school to produce course-level annual monitoring reports. These reports are informed by module reports, external examiners' reports and course-level data. Course reports are submitted to the awarding body and are also used to inform the Institutional Level Annual Monitoring Report. The Institutional Monitoring Report and the Higher Education Programme Self Assessment Report provide a rigorous and robust mechanism for ensuring standards.

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

18 The College has a clear Professional Development Policy. This policy states that it seeks to 'lead, develop and motivate all staff through continuous professional development, consistent with the present and future skills needs of the college.' Its commitment in this area is recognised by the Investors in People Gold award. The College has continued its proactive programme of staff development since the Developmental engagement. The implementation of staff development policies has resulted in effective professional development.

19 The College has a positive approach towards the professional updating of both academic and support staff teams. It identifies staff development needs and they are discussed as part of the annual performance management review for each individual. Staff use the review process to request support for additional professional development. Where requests fit with the strategic plan, the College supports them. There is a dedicated

budget for scholarly activity, which ensures the provision is supported effectively by subject-level staff development. For example, the College has supported staff from the BSc (Hons) Psychology and FdA Sports Coaching to undertake higher degrees.

20 All new members of staff are provided with mentors. Those new to teaching are required to undertake a recognised teacher training qualification. New programme leaders receive valuable support for this role both from heads of studies and heads of school within the College and from course leaders at the University.

21 The College maintains a central record of relevant continuous professional development. This involves logging the participation and completion of all in-house professional development activities, for example training on the Academic Infrastructure. The College also records staff development undertaken externally. All aspects of staff development are included in the annual appraisal process. Take-up of staff development relevant to higher education is high. The team considers that the amount and effectiveness of staff development represents good practice.

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 body.

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?

22 The College operates within a clearly articulated institutional agreement and a memorandum of cooperation with the University of Central Lancashire. Responsibilities for assuring the quality of learning opportunities are described in these documents. The College is responsible for the quality of all the teaching on the provision, student support, most student induction, and the provision of suitable work-based learning opportunities. It is also responsible for ensuring that learning accommodation and resources are appropriate. Admissions through the University and Colleges Admissions Service are the responsibility of the University, while part-time applications are managed by the College. The University provides substantial access to its facilities.

23 Procedures for delegating and reporting the responsibilities for the quality of learning opportunities include those described in paragraphs 9 to 12. There are also effective procedures for allocating resources, based on the priorities identified by the senior management team, informed by the outcomes from College reporting procedures.

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

24 The College's procedures for fulfilling its responsibilities to the awarding body for the quality of learning opportunities consist of those described in paragraphs 9 to 12 and 22 and 23. The success of policies is evaluated through extensive feedback from students, input from staff and audits of parts of the provision. These procedures, including the role of the heads of studies, allow the exchange of effective practice.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

25 The College has mapped and has been guided by the sections of the Academic Infrastructure relevant to the quality of learning opportunities. For example, the *Code of practice, Section 3: Disabled students* has been mapped in detail and is the basis for the extensive College support in this area. The *Code of practice, Section 8: Career education, information, advice and guidance* and *Section 9: Work-based and placement learning* are used effectively as guidance for staff.

26 Both academic staff and staff providing central services use the guidance in the Academic Infrastructure. The College has provided extensive training to all staff on the Academic Infrastructure.

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

27 The College's teaching and learning strategy is described in a number of separate documents. The strategy ensures that all staff are well informed about the latest learning and teaching practice, are qualified to at least the level above that at which they are teaching, and either hold a teaching qualification or are working towards one.

28 The College has a comprehensive and effective system for measuring and improving the quality of teaching and learning. This includes regular classroom observations, the grades for which indicate a very high level of performance in terms of quality and capacity to improve. The observations have been developed from the rigorous procedures used for further education and enhanced by a recognition and differentiation for higher education.

29 Student views on teaching and learning are gathered as part of the observation system, as well as through numerous surveys and questionnaires. The views of staff are gathered through annual individual performance management reviews. These procedures allow the College to monitor effectively all its teaching and learning and to continually adapt and improve. Students the team met and the results of other student feedback indicate that the quality of teaching is high. The team considers that the effective procedures in place to ensure the high quality of learning and teaching are good practice.

30 The College is seeking to extend the use of the virtual learning environment for supporting learning and teaching. An audit has taken place in which usage was measured. An opportunity to analyse the scope and quality of the materials was not taken. The amount of learning and teaching material posted on the virtual learning environment varies considerably between modules and a significant amount needs updating. The College is seeking to manage more effectively the procedures for dealing with outdated material. Use of the virtual learning environment by students varies considerably between curriculum areas.

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

31 The College has a range of effective student support services. These include college-wide systems for pastoral, financial and learning support and highly responsive academic support from tutors and library staff. Information about the support is readily available. For example, the 'My Futures' virtual learning environment page is an excellent resource giving details on sources of advice and guidance and key contact details. Staff provide effective support and guidance for work-based learning. The College is responsive to the needs and requests of students and, in general, student satisfaction with all types of support is very high.

32 Policies on the support for disabled students are closely aligned with the *Code of practice, Section 3: Disabled students*. This results in effective practice. For example, the College has a full-time employee whose role includes responsibility for coordinating provision and access to higher education for disabled students. Students value this support.

33 Course teams use personal development plans to maintain oversight of students' individual progress and to identify support needs. Students can access tutor support readily and directly while at College and through electronic communications off-site. Part-time students appreciate the attentiveness and speed of responses received from tutors through email. The team concludes that effective student support from a large range of separate procedures contributes to very high student retention and achievement rates and is good practice.

34 The College has a system of induction for all new higher education students. Most students find their induction valuable. However, in a few cases students the team met found their induction repetitive.

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

35 Staff development procedures are described in paragraphs 18 to 21.

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?

36 College resources fully support the provision and are well managed. Physical resources, such as accommodation and specialist equipment, give students access to suitable spaces and industry-standard facilities. These include hardware and software packages similar to those used in the industries relevant to College courses. College policies and practices ensure that these facilities are monitored and updated to remain fit for purpose. Both full-time and part-time students indicated that resources provide suitable support for their learning. Student views on resourcing are listened to and acted upon by the College.

37 Students indicated satisfaction with library access. They have full access to the library at the University, which they find valuable. The University provides electronic resources in the form of e-books and access to its virtual learning environment. An effective inter-library loan system is in place between the College and the University and also between the College's own libraries. The College provides books for students studying off-site at Wigan Childcare Services Professional Development Centre at Hindley, near Wigan.

38 Enrichment and enhancement opportunities are abundant. They include professional, academic and personal learning opportunities in the form of trips, visits and meaningful engagements with diverse aspects of relevant industries. Work placements are properly resourced. Employers spoke highly of the College and of its students. Foundation Degrees all involve high levels of employer engagement and work-based learning, which is well designed to give students a greater understanding of the world of work. Some, for example the FdA Integrated Education and Care of Children and Young People and the FdSc Sports Coaching, involve significant placement learning. Others, such as the FdSc in Games Design, make extensive use of industry visits and live briefs. College staff maintain responsibility for summative assessment, with several courses providing valuable opportunities for employers to feed into formative assessment. Some courses, for example the FdA Graphic Design, make extensive use of employers as visiting speakers or project

mentors. The FdA Public Services has an innovative assessment methodology for critical incidents training, which draws on practice provided by the Lancashire Constabulary. Work-based learning and effective employer engagement in Foundation Degrees is of a high standard and enhances students' appreciation of the world of work. The team considers this to be good practice.

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 body 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?

39 Responsibility for different types of public information is identified in the detailed partnership agreement with the University of Central Lancashire. The self-evaluation indicates the types of public information under five headings: external and marketing information; admissions and enrolment information; course information; advice and guidance information; and internal information to Runshaw students pre-enrolment. Each category includes a number of separate publications. The College provides information in a variety of forms including written, verbal and electronic. In the majority of cases, responsibility for the information is shared with the University. Most module information is provided directly by the University. This is also the case for some induction guidance. The College cooperates with the University on all these sources of information to enhance the student experience. There are opportunities for the inclusion of material about the College in most published information provided by the University.

40 The College publishes information about its provision in a dedicated area on its website. Possible routes for progression from further education are described. There are links to information on application, enrolment, funding, learning resources and student services. Web-based information currently meets basic Disability Discrimination Act requirements. A new and fully Disability Discrimination Act compliant website is under construction, which will benefit from quarterly compliance tests.

41 Hard-copy publications are also available. These include the prospectus and the recently improved course factsheets. The factsheets provide comprehensive information about the application process and important features of each course. Information and guidance is available prior to enrolment from admissions staff, course leaders and the University on request, at interviews and at taster events. The College provides employers with information enabling them to support work-related learning effectively.

42 Students benefit from some excellent, specialised and detailed guidance information. For example, on enrolment all students receive the very useful Handbook and Diary, jointly authored by the College and University, containing essential academic information. This document also makes students aware of data protection and access issues. Study support materials include the valuable student-authored 'Stop, Look and Listen' guides produced on a subject basis. They give a student account of fundamental aspects of assessment, such as feedback. These guides, which are in addition to the information provided in module and course handbooks, the team considers to be good practice.

**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?**

43 Following the recommendation of the Developmental engagement, the College has developed its procedures for the approval of public information in consultation with the University. These detailed procedures are described in explicit guidance notes and flow charts. College information is regularly checked through the annual monitoring process and publicity materials are agreed with the University Partnership Development Office. The College receives feedback from students on the public information it provides and overall this is highly favourable. Students the team met confirmed this.

44 All students are provided with course handbooks and module information packs at the beginning of the course. The Developmental engagement report recommended that the College work collaboratively with the University to improve the quality and consistency of course handbooks and module information packs. This is clearly reflected in the action plan. As a result, a new BSc (Hons) Psychology course handbook is now available. Course handbooks are now produced to a template that provides high quality and comprehensive information to students.

45 Module information packs are still variable in quality, with some providing limited support for learning. In most cases the University has primary responsibility for content. The College has stated that where information could be improved it will proactively interact with the University to ensure progress. The team considers it desirable for the College to consult with the University, within the context of the partnership agreement, to ensure that all students receive module information packs of a high quality.

46 The Developmental engagement recommended the greater use of the virtual learning environment by staff and students. A college aim is to use the virtual learning environment as a source of course information for students. However, this aim is only partly fulfilled, with some modules providing little or outdated information. The team considers it advisable that the College develop the virtual learning environment both as a source of current information and as an aid to learning and teaching to enhance the quality of the student experience.

47 A small number of students on the BSc (Hons) Science (Foundation Entry) received insufficient information, advice and guidance from the University on progression opportunities prior to enrolling at the College. The College has taken action to fully inform the students and make sure that they are not disadvantaged. The College has also improved course factsheets to include more comprehensive information for applicants, including those referred directly by the University.

48 Information regarding assessment opportunities is generally accurate. In a few course handbooks, where inconsistencies on re-assessment opportunities are apparent, the College has taken the responsibility for ensuring that students receive correct information. Students understand that the marks issued during the academic year are subject to internal moderation and ratification at the examination boards at the end of the academic year for progression or award.

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

49 The Developmental engagement in assessment took place in September 2009. It addressed the following lines of enquiry agreed with the College:

Line of enquiry 1: To what extent does the practice in specifying assessment tasks and marking of student work, for modules which the College has this responsibility, ensure that module intended learning outcomes are effectively assessed?

Line of enquiry 2: How does the College ensure that the quality and timeliness of written feedback to students on summative in-course work enable students to see what standards they have achieved and how they can improve their future performance?

Line of enquiry 3: To what extent does the College ensure that the assessment information given to students is accurate and complete; and how effectively is this information communicated to students?

50 The areas of the good practice identified during the Developmental engagement were the support given to students with disabilities; the close mapping of learning outcomes to teaching and learning sessions on the Certificate/Postgraduate Certificate in Education programme; the student identification of the relevance of the learning outcomes to each section of their work on the Certificate/PgCert in Education and FdA Early Years Education programmes, so improving their level of achievement; the use on the FdA Sports Coaching of grading criteria providing valuable guidance on the requirements of each level of achievement; the internal moderation process that monitors and enhances the quality of feedback to students; the high quality of feedback on summatively assessed work; the staff development programme that enhances assessment practice; the valuable higher education student handbook; and the support available to students to enhance their learning experience.

51 The Developmental engagement indicated that it was advisable to improve staff understanding and use of the Academic Infrastructure, and to develop and implement formal procedures for ensuring that information publicised to students and external stakeholders was accurate and complete. It was also considered desirable to increase the standardisation of course handbooks and module information packs so that all students get comparable information about assessment; to discuss with the University of Central Lancashire the possibility of introducing a handbook for first-year BSc (Hons) Psychology students; and to extend the use of the virtual learning environment by staff and students.

D Foundation Degrees

52 The College has 15 Foundation Degrees with 381 full-time and 53 part-time students, giving a total of 414 full-time equivalents. In 2009-10 there were 372 full-time equivalents comprising 345 full-time and 42 part-time students. The Foundation Degree provision has grown substantially over the last five years. A key part of the College's strategic plan, it has been developed to meet the progression needs of further education

students and to meet local and business needs. One new programme, the FdSc Forensic Science, started in September 2010. The College has no plans for new Foundation Degrees for September 2011 entry.

53 The expansion of Foundation Degrees has been a large part of the College's strategic plan. Generally, the Foundation Degree provision is managed effectively, with substantial support from the University of Central Lancashire, sometimes as part of the Lancashire Lifelong Learning Network. It meets the needs of local students and employers. The success of the provision was endorsed in March 2010 by the University of Central Lancashire institutional overview of the periodic programme reviews at the College.

54 All the team's findings and conclusions are relevant to Foundation Degrees.

E Conclusions and summary of judgements

55 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Runshaw 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, the University of central Lancashire.

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

- the implementation of the Professional Development Policy ensures that the delivery of the provision is supported effectively by staff development (paragraphs 18 to 21)
- the College has very effective procedures for the assurance and enhancement of learning and teaching, which provide students with a high quality learning experience (paragraphs 27 to 29)
- the College has a large range of effective student support procedures, which students value highly and which result in very high retention and achievement rates (paragraphs 31 to 33)
- work-based learning with effective employer engagement on the Foundation Degrees is of a high standard and enhances students' appreciation of the world of work (paragraph 38)
- students benefit from specialised documents like the Handbook and Diary and 'Stop, Look and Listen' guides, which provide student-friendly and detailed guidance on key aspects of programme delivery (paragraph 42).

57 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

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

- ensure that any audit undertaken is effective in supporting the monitoring and enhancement of the provision and as a method for responding to student concerns (paragraph 12)
- develop the virtual learning environment both as a source of current information and as an aid to learning and teaching to enhance the quality of the student experience (paragraphs 30, 46).

59 The team considers that it is **desirable** for the College to:

- ensure that all students receive feedback in a timely manner to help them with future assessments (paragraph 16)
- consult with the University of Central Lancashire, within the context of the partnership agreement, to ensure that all students receive module information packs of a high quality (paragraphs 44, 45).

60 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.

61 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.

62 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.

Runshaw College action plan relating to the Summative review: February 2011						
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:						In all cases evaluated through course-level and programme-level annual monitoring reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the implementation of the Professional Development Policy ensures that the delivery of the provision is supported effectively by staff development (paragraphs 18 to 21) 	Celebrate achievement through article in College newspaper, Staff Update	June 2011	Heads of school/ Curriculum Improvement Team leaders and Head of Studies Higher Education	Published article	Head of Studies Higher Education and Assistant Principal	Overall Professional Development Report to indicate enhanced levels of professional development - impact seen through observation profile and student feedback (module evaluation questionnaires (MEQs)/National Student Survey (NSS)/Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC))
	Promote through UCLan Partnership Forum	April 2011	Head of Studies Higher Education			
	Extend reciprocal peer observations with UCLan - include as element in staff performance management review	October 2011	Head of Studies Higher Education/heads of school/Head of Teaching and Learning Academy	8 reciprocal peer observations undertaken	Heads of school - performance management reviews	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the College has very effective procedures for the assurance 	Establish a Higher Education Teaching and Learning Forum which seeks to:	Start - June 2011	Head of Studies Higher Education	2 meetings per year	Head of Studies Higher Education and Assistant Principal Adult	Impact seen through Observation profile and student

<p>and enhancement of learning and teaching, which provide students with a high quality learning experience (paragraphs 27 to 29)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share best practice generate ideas promote innovation <p>Extend the use of 'walkthrough' observations</p> <p>Extend reciprocal peer observations with UCLan - include as element in staff performance management review</p>	2011-12	Head of Studies Higher Education/heads of school	2 walkthrough periods (1 during induction/1 in semester 1 or semester 2)	and Higher Education Heads of school	feedback (MEQs/ NSS/SSLC)
		2011-12	Heads of school/ Curriculum Improvement Team leaders and Head of Studies Higher Education	8 reciprocal peer observations undertaken	Heads of school - performance management review	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the College has a large range of effective student support procedures, which students value highly and which result in very high retention and achievement rates (paragraphs 31 to 33) 	<p>Introduce a series of 'sharing best practice in student support' sessions in higher education tutors meetings</p> <p>Establish new service level agreement with Library and update those with Study Support and Student Services</p>	<p>2011-12</p> <p>Head of Studies Higher Education</p> <p>November 2011</p> <p>Head of Studies Higher Education/heads of function</p>	<p>2 sessions delivered</p> <p>Service Level Agreements approved</p>	<p>Head of Studies Higher Education/heads of school</p> <p>Head of Studies Higher Education/heads of function</p>	<p>Impact seen through student feedback (MEQs/ NSS/SSLC)</p> <p>Monitored through Higher Education Study Support Group and Student Services Support Groups</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work-based learning with effective 	Review work-based learning policy, procedure,	September 2011	Head of Studies Higher Education	Updated policy and procedure approved -	Head of Studies/ heads of school	Through direct feedback from employers

<p>employer engagement on the Foundation Degrees is of a high standard and enhances students' appreciation of the world of work (paragraph 38)</p>	<p>documentation and information packs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff • students • employers • health and safety <p>Introduce a series of 'sharing best employer engagement' sessions in higher education tutors' meetings</p>	2011-12	Head of Studies Higher Education	<p>documentation in place</p> <p>2 sessions delivered</p>		<p>Through annual course and programme level annual monitoring reports</p> <p>Module reports for work-based learning modules</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students benefit from specialised documents like the Handbook and Diary and 'Stop, Look and Listen' guides, which provide student-friendly and detailed guidance on key aspects of programme delivery (paragraph 42). 	<p>Review and further update higher education Handbook and Diary - upload to college virtual learning environment for wider dissemination</p>	September 2011	Head of Studies Higher Education	<p>Handbook in place, on virtual learning environment and distributed</p>	Head of Studies Higher Education	<p>Student feedback - induction checklist/MEQs/ NSS/SSLC</p>

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is advisable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that any audit undertaken is effective in supporting the monitoring and enhancement of the provision and as a method for responding to student concerns (paragraph 12) 	Review virtual learning environment audit scope and implementation	June 2011	Head of Studies Higher Education/Assistant Principal	Introduction of wider scope of audit to include date accuracy of course and module handbooks	Assistant Principal	Audit to show full compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop the virtual learning environment both as a source of current information and as an aid to learning and teaching to enhance the quality of the student experience (paragraphs 30, 46). 	<p>Review current information learning technology/virtual learning environment strategy and implementation</p> <p>Plan, develop and deliver a VLE training programme through the information learning technology Carousel to include: Using your virtual learning environment/ Maximising virtual learning environment/ Mastering virtual learning environment</p>	<p>June 2011</p> <p>2011-12</p>	<p>Head of Studies Higher Education/ Assistant Principal</p> <p>Head of Studies Higher Education</p>	<p>Virtual Learning Environment Strategy agreed and updated</p> <p>3 professional development sessions delivered</p> <p>Evaluate through performance management review</p>	<p>Senior Management Team</p> <p>Heads of school/ Head of Studies Higher Education</p>	Impact evaluated through virtual learning environment audit which includes student feedback on their virtual learning environment experience plus usual student feedback mechanisms

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is desirable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that all students receive feedback in a timely manner to help them with future assessments (paragraph 16) 	<p>Review and update existing sources of information, advice and guidance relating to assessment used with students; course/ module handbooks etc</p> <p>Deliver professional development sessions for higher education tutors re best practice in assessment, including timeliness of feedback</p>	<p>September 2011</p> <p>October 2011</p>	<p>Curriculum Improvement Team leaders/ Head of Studies Higher Education</p> <p>Head of Studies Higher Education</p>	<p>Information, advice and guidance material updated and in place - clarity re feedback deadlines</p> <p>MEQ student satisfaction regarding assessment to be greater than 80 per cent</p>	<p>Head of Studies Higher Education</p> <p>Head of Studies Higher Education</p>	<p>Module reports</p> <p>Student feedback - induction checklist/MEQs/ NSS/SSLC</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consult with the University of Central Lancashire, within the context of the partnership agreement, to ensure that all students receive module information packs of a high quality (paragraphs 44, 45). 	<p>Arrange meeting with UCLan Academic Quality and Standards Unit to discuss Module Information Pack/ Handbook content and how these can be contextualised for Runshaw higher education students</p>	<p>June 2011</p>	<p>Head of Studies Higher Education</p>	<p>Revisions to new Module Information Packs/Handbooks in place</p>	<p>Curriculum Improvement Team leaders/ heads of school/studies higher education</p>	<p>Module Reports</p>

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