



Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

Richmond Adult Community College

May 2011

SR 63/2010

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2011

ISBN 978 1 84979 362 9

All QAA's publications are available on our website www.qaa.ac.uk

Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

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 Richmond Adult Community College carried out in May 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 agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, 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:

- staff development opportunities, the development of good practice materials and their dissemination through electronic media enable all staff to undertake effective continuing professional development
- the use of the virtual learning environment by the Foundation Degrees' staff and students enables effective support and communication to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

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:

- continue the development of the Higher Education Committee to fulfil and embed its quality assurance and enhancement role and consider widening its membership where appropriate.

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

- continue the mapping of its policies and procedures to ensure alignment with the *Code of practice* and disseminate this process and its outcomes widely
- review and formalise its policies and procedures for the quality assurance and monitoring of public information.

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 Richmond Adult Community 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 Kingston University and the University of Westminster. The review was carried out by Ms Colette Coleman and Mr Harry Davison (reviewers) and Mrs Monica Owen (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 bodies, meetings with staff, students and partner institutions, reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. As its higher education provision is less than 100 full-time equivalent students, in accordance with the published review method, the College elected not to have a Developmental engagement in assessment. 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 Richmond Adult Community College is a general further education college for adults, employers and young people who wish to learn in an adult environment. The College is located in South West London and has two main sites: Parkshot, located in Richmond-upon-Thames, incorporating the Richmond Business School; and Clifden in Twickenham. The College also operates in local community venues and on employer premises. The College's mission is to 'enable adults to unlock their talent and fulfil their potential through learning, skills and enterprise'. The College principally serves Richmond-upon-Thames and surrounding areas in South West London. Although Richmond is an affluent borough, it does have wards with levels of deprivation. Ofsted inspections in May 2006 and 2010 found the College's provision to be outstanding.

5 The College has approximately 285 full-time and 7,847 part-time students. Of these, 21 full-time students are enrolled on the FDs Information Technology for E-Business and 19 part-time students are enrolled on the Certificate in Education and the Professional Graduate Certificate of Education, giving a total of 30.5 full-time equivalent students. The programmes are taught by 7.3 full-time equivalent established staff and 12 part-time sessional members of staff. The College's higher education programmes are taught in two of four faculties: the FDs in the Faculty of Business and Information Technology and the education programmes in the Faculty of Learning and Development. The education programmes are delivered at the Clifden site and the Foundation Degrees at the Parkshot site.

6 The College offers the following programmes, with the full-time equivalent numbers in brackets:

Validated by Kingston University

- FdSc Information Technology for E-Business (Multimedia) (4)
- FdSc Information Technology for E-Business (Web Specialist) (17)

Validated by the University of Westminster

- Certificate in Education (Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector) (8)
- Professional Graduate Certificate of Education (Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector) (1.5).

Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies

7 The relationships with the University of Westminster and Kingston University (the Universities) are set out in specific franchise agreements. The University of Westminster under the academic leadership of Westminster Exchange, the University's learning and teaching development unit, validates the Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate of Education. The programmes are delivered in eight colleges in London. The consortium forms part of the Westminster Partnership Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training of which the University of Westminster is a founder member. The Administrative Annex of the Memorandum of Collaboration describes how the two institutions share responsibilities. The partnership with Kingston University is ratified through a Memorandum of Cooperation and the Field Liaison Document provides a detailed description of the distribution of responsibilities. The Foundation Degrees were developed in collaboration with the New Technology Institute, which is based within the Faculty of Computing, Information Systems and Mathematics at the University. The College is one of five college partners within the New Technology Institute consortium.

8 While the partnership agreements differ in detail, the Universities retain ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities. This responsibility is met through validations, moderation, appointment of external examiners, examination boards, awarding qualifications and the Universities' own annual monitoring. The College has operational responsibility for the delivery of the programmes, including the marking of assessment, and the welfare and support of the students. The College and the Universities recognise that they jointly contribute to the development and quality of the programmes.

Recent developments in higher education at the College

9 During 2009-10 the College revised its priorities and resources with a strategy to invest in information technology infrastructure and capital investment in the Clifden site. The College's Strategic Plan and Higher Education Strategy aim for the College to be an outstanding provider of higher education programmes. The College is considering developing its existing higher education provision to include higher level apprenticeships. In anticipation of possible reduced funding, the College is also exploring the viability of providing its higher education programmes on a fees-only basis and obtaining additional accreditation from other awarding bodies and partners. These plans would include a new Foundation Degree.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

10 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team and a submission was made. Senior staff met with student representatives and drew up questions for student focus groups. The learning directors or curriculum leaders briefed the students on IQER and the student written submission. Each year of the programmes held a focus group meeting, minuted by the Quality Administrator, and discussed the questions in depth. Thirty-one students attended the focus groups and the questions were sent to any absent student to return with comments. The minutes and comments were written up and the Director of Quality and Assessment analysed these and presented them as the student submission to the students for feedback. The student representatives signed off the final submission as a true reflection of student views. The team considered the submission helpful in highlighting issues and good practice for further enquiry. The team also met students during the review visit.

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?

11 Responsibility for the management of higher education is integrated within the College's further education management structure. The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) is responsible for overseeing academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities. The Quality Team, led by the Director of Quality and Assessment, and learning directors who lead the faculties, reports to the Vice Principal. Learning managers have responsibility for a number of related programmes within each faculty. Curriculum leaders undertake the operational activities of running and delivering each programme, overseeing the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of the student experience. This includes liaison with the universities. The responsibilities for managing academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities are clear.

12 The programmes are fully integrated into the universities' systems to maintain academic standards and promote consistency of learning opportunities across the consortia. The Kingston University Liaison Officer and the University of Westminster Consortium Programme Leader work closely with the programme teams and the partnership is a strength of the provision. College staff attend university committees and assessment boards. For example, staff attend the Board of Study at Kingston University, where the Foundation Degree programmes are reviewed, and opportunities for new pathways, such as multimedia, are discussed with the partner colleges. The external examiner states that 'the cross collegiate collaboration between Kingston University and partner centres is exemplary'. The Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate of Education curriculum leader attends the programmes' course management committees, moderation and assessment boards. The College has contributed to curriculum development by collaborating in the design of a module for students teaching in prison and offender education. The College's commitment to the development of its university partnerships enables the College to develop and deliver high quality programmes, which support local need.

13 The College set up the Higher Education Committee in 2010 to coordinate and monitor the programmes. The Director of Quality and Assessment chairs the Committee and its membership consists of the two learning directors, a learning manager and an administrator. Representatives from the awarding bodies are invited to attend and contribute. The Committee meets monthly and reports on a termly basis to Academic Board, which in turn reports to the Governing Body's Quality and Curriculum Subcommittee. The Higher Education Committee's terms of reference include responsibility for the Higher Education Strategy; ensuring the College fulfils its obligations to the awarding bodies; and monitoring the quality of the students' experience. Overseeing and monitoring the implementation of quality improvement action plans, advising on quality procedures and identifying and disseminating best practice are also its responsibility. The meetings to date have largely focused on discussing and planning the Summative review and limited work has taken place in relation to the Committee's broader quality assurance and enhancement role. It is advisable that the College continues the development of the Higher Education Committee to fulfil and embed its quality assurance and enhancement role and considers widening its membership where appropriate.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

14 The Universities' procedures and documentation, such as programme specifications, are set within the context of the Academic Infrastructure. College staff are involved in programme approval and validation processes, in line with the *Code of practice, Section 7: Programme design, approval, monitoring and review*. College staff took part in the revalidation of the Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate of Education through the University of Westminster consortium in 2009-10. The programme specifications for the Information Technology for E-Business Foundation Degrees clearly indicate alignment with the subject benchmark statement, the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark* and the FHEQ. College Foundation Degree staff have attended level 6 classes at Kingston University and the teacher training staff have explored differences in academic levels through assessment writing workshops and other meetings at the University of Westminster.

15 A staff development programme has been put in place for 2010-11 to improve understanding of the Academic Infrastructure. This has included workshops run by both the Universities. Subject benchmark statements and programme specifications have been placed on the virtual learning environment for further dissemination. The Higher Education Committee has begun to map the College policies and procedures to the precepts of the *Code of practice* to make explicit their alignment and support awareness of the Academic Infrastructure. It is desirable that the College continues the mapping of its policies and procedures to ensure alignment with the *Code of practice* and disseminates this process and its outcomes widely.

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?

16 The College is required to contribute to the Universities' quality assurance processes through the annual monitoring of programmes. Module evaluations are a key part of this process. The Foundation Degrees' curriculum leader writes a module review and development plan, which is considered at Kingston University's Board of Study. Module leaders' reports on the education programmes are sent twice-yearly together with an annual curriculum leader's report to the University of Westminster.

17 The College also undertakes its own annual monitoring procedures. All teaching staff and curriculum leaders complete a programme review, using a range of performance data and evidence, such as teaching observations and student and external examiner feedback. This review feeds into sector subject area reviews and the College self-assessment report. The higher education curriculum leaders produce higher education self-assessment reports, which contribute to the College higher education self assessment report. This makes the issues and actions relating to higher education more explicit to inform the college self assessment report and quality improvement plan. The Summative review self-evaluation action plan had become the focus of quality improvement during 2010-11, with the majority of actions being achieved. Annual monitoring is reported through the Higher Education Committee to Academic Board.

18 Programme teams carry out marking and moderation according to the Universities' academic regulations. Kingston University moderates a sample of assessments, and outcomes are disseminated to the programme team through the virtual learning environment. Tutors on the teacher training programmes attend moderation events at the University of Westminster and these provide opportunities to discuss and review assessment briefs and outcomes and the sharing of good assessment practice. The teacher training external examiner reports confirm that a rigorous internal moderation process is in place.

19 External examiners have a substantial role in the maintenance and enhancement of academic standards, in line with the *Code of practice, Section 4: External examining*. External examiners appointed by the Universities carry out external monitoring, including the sampling of student work across partner colleges. They confirm that academic standards are appropriate and provide specific feedback on assessment to the College at the assessment boards. External examiner comments are made available to the Foundation Degree staff and students on the virtual learning environment and are disseminated to the teaching team by the education programmes' curriculum leader. The team concludes that robust systems enable the College to assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure standards of the provision meet the awarding bodies' requirements.

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

20 The College's Staff Development Policy and Procedure outlines the aims, priorities and processes of learning and development for College staff. Staff development needs are identified through staff appraisal, teaching observations and course reviews. All staff are required to develop continuing professional development plans and these are recorded and monitored by the Human Resources Department. Outcomes from monitoring inform the self-assessment reports and quality improvement plans.

21 College staff participate in a number of networks, such as the New Technology Institute, to ensure subject specialist knowledge meets industry expectations. The Westminster Exchange also provides opportunities through its Good Practice Exchange meetings. Documents and resources are circulated after each meeting. All the teacher training staff are required by the University of Westminster to attend an annual assessment writing workshop. Good practice is also exchanged through web groups, which have run since October 2008. Foundation Degree staff have attended training at Kingston University to update themselves on vendor qualifications for specific computing software or systems training. In order to support scholarly activity the College has paid the teacher training curriculum leader to undertake a master's degree module in the teaching of language, literacy and numeracy and has reduced her teaching hours to support this activity. The team concludes that there are extensive opportunities for the staff to undertake staff development activities to support academic standards.

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?

22 Line management responsibilities and reporting arrangements through the College committee structure for the quality of learning opportunities are detailed in paragraphs 11 to 13. The Director of Quality and Assessment, who reports to the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) is responsible for Learning and Information Services, which includes career guidance, the Learning Resource Centres at the two sites and obtaining student feedback. Admissions and information technology is the responsibility of the Vice Principal (Finance and Corporate Services). The Learning Director of the Faculty of Business and Information Technology is responsible for developing and managing the virtual learning environment. The vice principals, learning directors and the Director of Learning and Assessment work closely together to deliver high-quality learning opportunities.

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

23 The College is responsible for the recruitment of students, the general welfare and discipline of the students and the delivery and support of the curriculum. This includes the provision of library services, computing facilities and welfare services. The process by which the College assures itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to its awarding bodies is detailed in paragraphs 16 to 19. Annual monitoring provides a focus for the review and enhancement of the student experience. All staff take part in the programme annual review and these highlight the key areas relating to the quality of learning opportunities and contribute to the higher education self assessment reports. As part of the Summative review self-evaluation action plan, standardisation of agendas for the student-staff consultative committee meetings and termly course team meetings have been introduced to ensure all areas relating to the quality of the student learning experience are discussed and shared.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

24 The means by which the College engages with the Academic Infrastructure are described in paragraphs 14 and 15. The precepts of the *Code of practice, Section 10: Admissions to higher education, Section 8: Career education, information advice and guidance* and *Section 3: Disabled students* are part of the mapping exercise being undertaken by the Higher Education Committee. While senior managers of the different areas ensure that policies and procedures are aligned with the *Code of practice*, it is less clear that student services' staff are aware of relevant parts of the Academic Infrastructure. The wider dissemination of the outcomes of the Higher Education Committee's mapping of the *Code of practice* and other work on the Academic Infrastructure would ensure that all relevant staff understand the use of the Academic Infrastructure.

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

25 The College has an overall objective to achieve outstanding teaching quality on all programmes and has a number of systems in place to support this objective. The College has recently implemented a revised teaching observation framework where all tutors, including part-time sessional staff, are observed annually. There is a clear policy and procedure for annual staff appraisal, which is linked to the teaching observation scheme and course review to identify areas for staff development.

26 The programmes follow the teaching, learning and assessment strategies laid out in the programme specifications. The quality of teaching and learning is enhanced by activities with employers and work-based learning, in line with the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*. Volunteer placements for the Foundation Degrees are found through the Business Enterprise Network and web-based projects available at the College. A number of local employers, such as the Richmond Social Enterprise Partnership, have supported both first and second year projects. The projects often involve the design and setting up of websites. Project tutors work closely with employers who act as project mentors. Students confirmed that they receive considerable support from both the College and Kingston University in finding suitable work placements. Students on the education programmes require a minimum numbers of hours of teaching practice to be in place before being admitted to the programme. Teaching observations of students' professional practice by tutors and mentors are an integral part of these programmes.

27 Foundation Degree staff are leading the development of the virtual learning environment for teaching and learning. The virtual learning environment has a generic College information zone, and a zone for programme information. On the Foundation Degrees this includes programme specifications, student handbooks, timetables, assignment briefs and assessment deadlines. The students maintain individual learning plans and store their assessment work and feedback within the virtual learning environment. The Foundation Degree students were very positive about the support they receive through the virtual learning environment, maintaining contact with tutors and fellow students through the use of web logs and discussion boards. There is also a staff area that gives tutors information from Kingston University and allows tutors to share the results of internal moderation and feedback from external examiners. The use of the virtual learning environment by the Foundation Degree staff and students enables effective support and communication to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and is good practice.

28 The College involves students in the evaluation of their learning experience in a number of ways, including module and programme evaluations. There is a College Learner Forum and each programme has a student-staff consultative committee, which student representatives attend. The Foundation Degree students receive a University Course Representative Student Handbook and information is placed within the virtual learning environment to support the students in this role. The teacher training curriculum leader briefs the representatives on their role and the programme handbook also provides guidance. The students confirmed that in most cases issues are addressed by talking to their module tutors or curriculum leaders. The students gave examples of where requests for more practical work had been granted. Overall, the team concludes that there are effective College systems to maintain and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

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

29 Prospective students are invited to open evenings and information events. All students are interviewed and provided with detailed programme information and information

on the College student support, including pastoral care, support for health problems and disabilities and financial support. All students receive a College induction, an induction to the programme requirements and attend an induction at the universities. The Universities' regulations, policies and procedures are available in the student handbook and on the universities' websites. The Foundation Degree students are informed of the university funding available for them to undertake vendor-specific qualifications.

30 Students receive an initial diagnostic assessment for any additional learning support required and this informs their individual learning plans. Specific skills workshops are incorporated into the programme, such as academic writing for the Foundation Degree students and referencing for the teacher training programmes. Students' individual learning plans detail their personal goals and strategies for achieving these. A weekly review of the individual learning plans in tutorials with module tutors or their curriculum leaders, who also act as personal tutors, is a strength of the provision. Students reported that they highly value this opportunity for reflection on their personal and academic development.

31 The students confirmed that assessment feedback is timely and informative. Written feedback on the teacher training programmes has improved in response to external examiner comments. The first year teacher training students studying on the newly validated programmes commented that they receive excellent feedback on draft assessment submissions. Students only receive summative feedback at the end of each module and the results are confirmed after an assessment board.

32 The Learning Resource Centres provide a range of material to support students. The students confirmed that staff are accessible both in College and by email and that they receive a high level of academic guidance and support. The Foundation Degree students are able to attend sessions at the university regarding career pathways and progression routes. The College effectively monitors academic support and the College central support services through annual review, student feedback and the management and committee structure.

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

33 Arrangements for staff development are detailed in paragraphs 20-21. The College has a rolling programme of continuing professional development, which is informed by the training plans for each faculty. Records show that the programme teams have undertaken a wide range of activities both within the College and at their respective awarding university to support the quality of learning opportunities, including equality and diversity training. New staff attend a College induction and all academic staff new to teaching are required to enrol on a teacher training programme. New teaching staff are also allocated a mentor and advanced practitioners are available to all staff identified as requiring support.

34 The College has run workshops on using the Institute for Learning's online personal learning space for tutors to plan, record and assess the impact of continuing professional development on their practice. Workshops have also been run on the use of the virtual learning environment. Advanced practitioners and higher education staff have authored good practice in teaching and assessment guides and these are available on the continuing professional development area of the virtual learning environment. This also holds material developed by the universities to support the delivery of the curriculum. The College also makes use of virtual training through the use of CD ROMs. Staff development opportunities, the development of good practice materials and their dissemination through electronic media enable all staff to undertake effective continuing professional development. This is good practice.

35 An important role of the Higher Education Committee is to support the sharing of good practice across the programmes and it has identified a day to share good practice in the management and feedback of assessment. The embedding of the role of the Higher Education Committee will further strengthen the dissemination of good practice across the programmes. The College has effective mechanisms to identify and support staff development activities through staff appraisal and annual monitoring.

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 Learning directors are responsible for resourcing the programmes through the college budgetary process and programme teams are required to show the resources are adequate at the time of programme approval. Ongoing resource needs are identified through module reviews and at the student-staff consultative committees. Each programme area has an annual budget for library resources and the learning managers are responsible for identifying resources for tutors and students. Both College sites have Learning Resource Centres with specialist software and a range of material to support students, both programme specific and to gain broader study skills. The Learning Resource Centres are open in the early evenings and Saturday mornings. An electronic assignment submission system run from the Learning Resource Centres is being trialled and students reported that this is working well.

37 There is a comprehensive Information Technology Investment Strategy and major investment took place at the end of 2010. This includes a roll-out of a wireless network across the College. The Foundation Degree programmes have dedicated classrooms and computer laboratories funded through the New Technology Institute. All students have access to facilities and resources offered by the universities, and students make use of the electronic resources available, such as e-books. All the teaching staff are approved by the respective awarding bodies and are well qualified, many with considerable professional experience and expertise. The students confirmed that software and computer equipment is up to date and that the book stock is adequate. Laptops are available for students to borrow. Overall, the College ensures the sufficiency and accessibility of learning resources to enable students to achieve the programmes' intended learning outcomes.

A 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?

38 The responsibilities of the College are clearly laid out in the Universities' agreements. Kingston University retains control of marketing of the programme and agrees an annual marketing strategy with the College. All promotional material has to be submitted to the universities for approval and the University of Westminster reserves the right to audit such material. The College's Marketing Team, which reports to the Learning Director of the Faculty of Creative and Cultural Studies, produces a prospectus and programme information

outlines, which are uploaded to the College website based upon a standard template. The Principal has overall responsibility for the marketing of the College.

39 The teacher training students receive at induction materials published by the University of Westminster. These include the academic regulations, module handbooks and a comprehensive programme handbook in hard-copy format. The College produces an annex of local information, which is approved by the university. The Foundation Degrees' curriculum leader is responsible for producing a student and a separate staff handbook based upon Kingston University templates. These are approved by the university's Liaison Officer and provided to staff and students in a web-based format through the virtual learning environment. Kingston University produces a guide for module leaders and work-based learning information to the students. The University of Westminster produces a number of guides for staff, including guidance for mentors. All assignments are agreed with the other colleges at consortium meetings convened by the universities. The students confirmed that they receive comprehensive information about the teaching and assessment of the programmes.

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?

40 Curriculum leaders are responsible for providing publicity information for approval by either the University of Westminster's Consortium Programme Leader or Kingston University's Faculty Marketing Manager prior to publication. College administrative staff monitor that the universities and the learning directors have signed off this information. The College's Marketing Team is responsible for producing in College house style the prospectus and programme outlines using this approved information and transferring them to the College website. Curriculum leaders check that the material has been placed in the relevant section of the website, although there is no formal recording of this part of the process. There is no formal contact between the College Marketing Team and the universities; although there are protocols for the production of college-devised materials, there is no formal policy.

41 The learning directors have overall responsibility for the content of the virtual learning environment, which is checked on an ongoing basis by the curriculum leaders. There is no minimum content requirement for each programme. The Higher Education Committee has responsibility for ensuring that published information is accurate and complete. Part of the Summative review self-evaluation action plan is for the Committee to lead an audit of all higher education marketing materials, but this work is still ongoing. It is desirable that the College reviews and formalises its policies and procedures for the quality assurance and monitoring of public information.

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

42 As the total full-time equivalent students funded by HEFCE at the College is less than 100, in accordance with the published review method, the College elected not to take part in a Developmental engagement.

D Foundation Degrees

43 The College offers the FD Information Technology for E- Business (Web Specialist) and the FD Information Technology for E-Business (Multimedia) validated by Kingston University as part of the New Technology Initiative consortium. Foundation Degrees are a key part of the Higher Education Strategy to meet the employment needs of the local area and support the employability of students. The College is considering the development of a Foundation Degree in entrepreneurship.

44 The review confirms that the programmes are aligned to the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. There is direct involvement of employers at validation and the programmes have developed links with local organisations to provide live assignment briefs and placements to support project work. The programmes are aligned to the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*. The programmes are leading the development of the virtual learning environment to support teaching and learning. Overall, the College has in place effective management of the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities of its Foundation Degrees.

45 All the conclusions in section E below relate to the Foundation Degree provision.

E Conclusions and summary of judgements

46 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Richmond Adult Community 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 bodies, Kingston University and the University of Westminster.

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

- staff development opportunities, the development of good practice materials and their dissemination through electronic media enable all staff to undertake effective continuing professional development (paragraphs 20 to 21 and 33 to 34)
- the use of the virtual learning environment by the Foundation Degree staff and students enables effective support and communication to enhance the quality of teaching and learning (paragraph 27).

Integrated quality and enhancement review

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

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

- continue the development of the Higher Education Committee to fulfil and embed its quality assurance and enhancement role and consider widening its membership where appropriate (paragraphs 13, 35 and 41).

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

- continue the mapping of its policies and procedures to ensure alignment with the *Code of practice* and disseminate this process and its outcomes widely (paragraphs 15 and 24)
- review and formalise its policies and procedures for the quality assurance and monitoring of public information (paragraphs 40 and 41).

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 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.

52 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.

53 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.

Richmond Adult Community College action plan relating to the Summative review May 2011

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<p>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:</p>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff development opportunities, the development of good practice materials and their dissemination through electronic media enable all staff to undertake effective continuing professional development (paragraphs 20 to 21 and 33 to 34) 	<p>Ensure all continuous professional development opportunities, including those from the New Technology Institute and the Westminster Exchange are shared with all higher education staff through the virtual learning environment</p> <p>Continuous professional development opportunities to be identified and reviewed through the Higher Education Committee</p> <p>Partners and other college departments to be invited to access</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Programme leaders</p> <p>Higher Education Committee</p>	<p>Continuous professional development materials placed on the continuous professional development area of the virtual learning environment</p> <p>List of continuous professional development opportunities in minutes for dissemination</p>	<p>Higher Education Committee</p>	<p>Self Assessment Reports</p> <p>Observations of teaching and learning</p> <p>Tutor feedback on continuous professional development evaluation sheets</p>

	<p>continuous professional development as appropriate</p> <p>Introduce system to log tutor participation in continuous professional development on the virtual learning environment</p>	End Sept 2011	Staff Development Officer	Report of tutors accessing continuous professional development online		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of the virtual learning environment by the Foundation Degree staff and students enables effective support and communication to enhance the quality of teaching and learning (paragraph 27). 	<p>1 The Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate of Education Learning Director, Learning Manager and Curriculum Leader to look at Foundation Degree use of the virtual learning environment to ascertain what can be transferred to the Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate of Education</p> <p>2 Create similar system to support course delivery and administration</p> <p>3 Trial system</p>	End Sept 2011	Learning Manager and Programme Leader for the Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate of Education (to work with Learning Director of Business and Information Technology and the Learning Resource Centre)	Course being supported by the virtual learning environment	Higher Education Committee	Student feedback

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"> continue the development of the Higher Education Committee to fulfil and embed its quality assurance and enhancement role and consider widening its membership where appropriate (paragraphs 13, 35 and 41). 	<p>Establish a schedule of meetings for 2011-12</p> <p>To review membership and terms of reference in light of the IQER report</p>	End of Sept 2011	Higher Education Committee	Higher Education Committee meeting minutes	Academic Board Quality & Curriculum Committee	Higher Education Self Assessment Report, College Self Assessment Report
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"> continue the mapping of its policies and procedures to ensure alignment with the <i>Code of practice</i> and disseminate this process and its 	<p>Complete mapping of <i>Code of practice</i> (actioned through Higher Education Committee)</p> <p>Review areas that need to be aware of sections of the <i>Code of practice</i></p>	<p>Dec 2011</p> <p>Dec 2011</p> <p>March 2012</p>	<p>Higher Education Committee members</p> <p>Higher Education Committee Heads of departments as appropriate;</p>	<p>Completed mapping</p> <p>Disseminated through workshops/virtual</p>	Academic Board	<p>Higher Education Self Assessment Report/College Self Assessment Report</p> <p>Tutor feedback</p> <p>Student feedback</p>

outcomes widely (paragraphs 15 and 24)	(admissions, information advice and guidance/careers etc) and plan programme to roll out awareness		Staff Development Officer	learning environment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review and formalise its policies and procedures for the quality assurance and monitoring of public information (paragraphs 40 and 41). 	<p>Complete audit of all higher education marketing materials</p> <p>Devise a policy for the production and quality assurance of print and web-based information</p>	Oct 2012	Programme leaders and Marketing Manager	<p>Completed audit</p> <p>New policy devised</p>	Higher Education Committee	<p>Accuracy of information</p> <p>Student feedback on quality of information</p>

RG 785 08/11

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Southgate House
Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000
Fax 01452 557070
Email comms@qaa.ac.uk
Web www.qaa.ac.uk