London College of Business Management and Information Technology

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

February 2012

Key findings about London College of Business Management and Information Technology

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in February 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, the Association of Business Practitioners and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding organisations.

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

Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the appointment of two external academic members to the Academic Standards Board brings a significant degree of external advice, expertise and reference to the College (paragraph 1.10)
- comprehensive and effective arrangements for both academic and pastoral student support enable students to develop (paragraph 2.10)
- effective arrangements for student representation enable and promote student participation in quality assurance arrangements and ensure strong student involvement across the provision (paragraph 2.12)
- the involvement of students in community and social responsibility activities enhances their learning experience and helps to develop employability and social skills (paragraph 2.13).

Recommendations

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

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

- review recruitment and admissions standards to ensure that they align with the demands of the programmes (paragraph 1.6)
- ensure the continued currency and accuracy of all public information (paragraph 3.9).

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

- strengthen the role of the formal committee structure when reviews of quality assurance and enhancement occur (paragraph 1.4)
- consider establishing specific programme review events to ensure that sufficient scrutiny is given to programme approval (paragraph 1.7)

- develop and publish an overarching set of precepts and expectations about assuring quality and standards (paragraph 1.9)
- develop a more systematic arrangement for the planning of staff development (paragraph 2.14)
- further develop the virtual learning environment as a genuinely interactive teaching and learning resource (paragraph 2.17).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight][1] (REO) conducted by [QAA] at London College of Business Management and Information Technology (the provider; the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, the Association of Business Practitioners, and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. The review was carried out by Mr Rob Mason, Mr Chris Maguire, Mr Brian Sullivan (reviewers) and Mr Ian Fleming (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook][2]. Evidence in support of the review included documentation supplied by the provider and awarding organisations, and meetings with staff, students and external stakeholders.

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

- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*
- the awarding organisations' requirements
- the Qualifications and Credit Framework
- relevant National Occupational Standards.

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

London College of Business Management and Information Technology (the College) is the independent educational body of Stockwell Green Community Services, a registered charity whose mission is to alleviate poverty through making people employable. The College has campuses in North Cheam and Balham, and the majority of its students are studying at the North Cheam campus. Programmes are offered up to Qualifications and Credit Framework level 7 and, at the time of the review, 1,137 students were pursuing programmes at levels 4 to 7.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations:

Association of Business Executives
- Level 4 Diploma in Business Management
- Level 4 Diploma in Management of Information Systems
- Level 4 Diploma in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Management
- Level 5 Higher Diploma in Business Management
- Level 5 Higher Diploma in Management of Information Systems
- Level 5 Higher Diploma in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Management
- Level 6 Graduate Diploma in Business Management
- Level 6 Graduate Diploma in Management of Information Systems
- Level 6 Graduate Diploma in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Management
- Level 7 Integrated Graduate Diploma in Business Management

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

- Level 6 Integrated Graduate Diploma in Management of Information Systems
- Level 6 Integrated Graduate Diploma in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Management
- Level 7 Diploma in Business Management

Association of Business Practitioners
- Level 7 Diploma in Leadership and Management in Health and Social Care Sector

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
- Level 4 Foundation in Accountancy
- Level 7 Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

The Provider's stated responsibilities

The College currently works with three awarding organisations which approve higher education programmes. The division of responsibilities between each awarding organisation and the College differs in each case. The awarding organisations determine the intended learning outcomes, indicative content and assessment guidelines for each programme. In addition, the College designs learning materials and manages the delivery of the programmes. In the case of the Association of Business Practitioners, the College designs, administers and verifies assessments internally before external verification by the awarding organisation.

Recent developments

The premises at the North Cheam site are still under development and there are plans to establish a large cafeteria, to extend and enhance the existing learning resources, and to relocate administrative offices in order to provide more teaching accommodation. In addition to ongoing discussions with Buckinghamshire New University and Birmingham City University about postgraduate level programme development, approval is being sought from Edexcel to deliver Higher National programmes during the 2012-13 academic year.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. A student submission, which provided helpful evidence for the team, was submitted with support and guidance having been provided to the student representatives. In addition, students met the coordinator during the preparatory meeting and reviewers during the review visit.

Detailed findings about London College of Business Management and Information Technology

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The programmes accredited by the Association of Business Executives (ABE) and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) are externally assessed and those awarded by the Association of Business Practitioners (ABP) are externally moderated. The College is responsible for the quality of the student experience and alignment with externally verified or assessed outcomes, as well as maintaining robust arrangements for external examinations, and has established structures and procedures to manage quality processes and assure standards.

1.2 The College has undertaken a significant review of its operation over the past 18 months, which has included a College-wide Review of Quality Assurance (CROQA) that reported in February 2011. This has led to the establishment of a new committee structure, a revised executive structure with the addition of a number of key roles, and significant development of its internal academic infrastructure and regulatory framework. These innovations are robust and the team considers them appropriate for the maintenance of academic standards, although they have yet to complete an academic cycle.

1.3 The Academic Standards Board has oversight of standards and the maintenance of quality assurance and enhancement at a strategic level. The Faculties Board has operational responsibility for review and audit of all aspects of academic standards and enhancement, and is supported in its work by three subcommittees: the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee and the Student Support and Experience Committee. These arrangements, while still relatively new, have the potential for effective protection of standards.

1.4 The College's committee structure is complemented by a strong executive structure, which benefits from the Senior Quality Assurance Lead, responsible for academic standards, and the Senior Learning and Teaching Lead, responsible for quality of delivery. These arrangements are already operating effectively. The team found examples where the policy and procedure were approved directly by executive authority rather than by review and oversight through committee. The College is recommended to review this approach to ensure that the policies and procedures governing quality assurance and enhancement are always reviewed through the formal committee structure, in order to ensure appropriate collegial ownership and oversight.

1.5 The College's relationship with its awarding organisations is positive and appropriately documented. It manages its relations with awarding organisations on a formal basis, through approval and re-approval events, the registration of students and the collation of student progression and achievement results. The relationships also operate effectively on a more informal basis through the awarding organisations' representation and engagement in the Advisory Board, and participation in the induction of students.

1.6 Retention, progression and achievement rates of students on some programmes are a cause for concern, which the College has identified for investigation by the Academic Standards Board. The retention, achievement and progression policy refers to a strict 'up or out' approach that protects academic standards. However, the statistics on some programmes indicate that the College may not be aligning recruitment standards and the

provision of academic support with the ability of applicants to meet the outcomes of the programmes. The College is advised to review its approach to recruitment and admissions standards so as to ensure that they align with the demands of the programmes.

1.7   While the College's overall structures to assure academic standards are appropriate, the processes surrounding programme design, delivery and review would benefit from further development. The expression of outcomes is not always clear and they are sometimes articulated as a syllabus. While programme design is currently processed within the schools with oversight by the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee, the College might consider establishing specific programme review events to ensure that particular and sufficient scrutiny is given to programme approval.

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

1.8   The College's main external reference points are those prescribed by its awarding organisations through their programme specifications and intended learning outcomes. Reference is also broadly made to the QCF and National Occupational Standards. The Academic Infrastructure does not feature strongly in the College's current provision, but there are some explicit references to it and the many new policies contain the essence of QAA precepts and practices.

1.9   As the majority of the College's provision falls under the accreditation of the ABE, its specifications have particular influence over the College. Furthermore, the definition of the role of the Senior Quality Assurance Lead has been derived from the ABP external verification guide for centres. It is clearly imperative that the criteria specified by the awarding organisations are met but the team considers it desirable that the College should develop and publish an overarching set of precepts and expectations about assuring standards and quality, incorporating appropriate elements of the Academic Infrastructure.

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

1.10   On all programmes except for the ABP level 7 diploma, the College does not have external verifiers to review programme quality, and is primarily dependent on the validation and monitoring reports of its awarding organisations. An internal examination board for postgraduate programmes first met early in 2012. The College demonstrates strength in the engagement of its awarding organisations in a proactive relationship, the investment in the establishment of cross-programme lead roles for quality and delivery, and in the appointment of two senior external academics to its Academic Standards Board and in their active and supportive engagement in the life of the College, which the team considers to represent good practice.

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

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The arrangements outlined in paragraphs 1.1-1.7 are also relevant in supporting the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.

2.2 The College has recently created the post of Senior Teaching and Learning Lead to ensure the effective implementation of quality assurance structure and related policies. A Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy has been introduced and is a sound basis for the maintenance and improvement of the student learning experience. Evaluation of new modules, module amendments, and withdrawals takes place through the Learning Teaching and Assessment Committee, which also considers resource allocation and the process and delivery of teaching and learning. At the time of the review, two meetings had taken place and topics discussed have been predominately operational. Useful outcomes included detailed plans for a student social responsibility week, and promotion of teaching qualifications for staff.

2.3 An effective internal verification policy sets out requirements for sampling and checking assessment decisions and advising and supporting assessors. Assessments for most programmes are set and marked by the appropriate awarding organisation. However, for the level 7 Diploma in Business Management, examinations and assessments are internally set, verified, marked and moderated. Constructive feedback is given to staff by the internal verifier when appropriate. The awarding organisation provides training to staff on effective marking practice and external verifiers confirm that assessments adequately cover the range of intended learning outcomes. A number of the awarding organisations' coordinators are responsible for ensuring that each relevant awarding organisation's requirements are met. External verifiers' reports for the ABP programme are discussed at the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee meetings, which have student representation, and the required actions are monitored.

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

2.4 The arrangements outlined in paragraphs 1.8-1.9 are also relevant here. The provider has referred to the Academic Infrastructure in developing the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. The precepts of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*), *Section 3*: *Disabled students* have been used effectively to prepare the College's disability policy.

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

2.5 The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and the teaching delivery quality assurance procedure underpin teaching practice and the College's mission that students should receive a high quality learning experience. In addition, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee has developed a learning, teaching and assessment matrix, a discussion document to promote the development of teaching and learning. Although this has the potential to promote better practice, it is too early to measure its full impact.

2.6 Intended learning outcomes for each programme are specified by the awarding organisations. The College produces programme specifications from these using a template for guidance. Programme module guides are produced for each semester and clearly show students the intended learning outcomes, including knowledge, thinking and practical skills

and skills for life and work. Companion lesson plans are produced using a generic template. This process ensures that intended learning outcomes are delivered effectively and that they meet the awarding organisations' requirements. An assessment rationale document, in the form of a checklist, is used by lecturers teaching on postgraduate level programmes to ensure that each intended learning outcome is assessed. Feedback is provided to lecturers in line with the College's internal verification policy.

2.7 A classroom lesson observation policy details protocols for carrying out observations and providing post-observation feedback. A pro forma with a checklist of criteria is currently used in a formal teaching session for all lecturers four times per academic year. This currently focuses primarily on the mechanics of teaching and does not fully address the extent of learning and the acquisition of higher skills such as independent learning and investigation. The College recognises this and is working to develop the process. In addition, there is an intention to move to peer observations as soon as practicable. Staff are enabled to discuss and reflect on their lesson with the observer and identify improvements; observations are also discussed in appraisals.

2.8 The mechanisms for the identification and sharing of good practice are set out in the sharing best practice policy. Examples of good practice in the policy are mainly taken from Ofsted and further education references and, although these are a useful basis for generating discussion, the College recognises that further development is needed to enable effective use at a higher education level. Programme teams also produce a good practice report each semester and the senior learning and teaching lead also identifies good practice from lesson observations. Currently, these mainly focus on traditional teaching methods and practice, and report on student visits. Informal discussions within the mutually supportive teaching teams also provide a useful vehicle for reflecting upon teaching and learning in a broader sense.

2.9 Policies for admissions and induction are used effectively by staff. The admissions process ensures that entry qualifications are assessed effectively and students accepted onto an appropriate programme of study. Entry criteria for each programme follow the awarding organisations' requirements. Initial student applications are also used to identify support for physical and learning disabilities but there is no formal diagnostic testing process.

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

2.10 The expectations for a successful student experience are laid out in a student experience policy, introduced late in 2011. The aims include the need to identify appropriate support, use effective approaches to its delivery, and foster intellectual, creative and personal growth. There are a variety of support mechanisms. Formal requests from students for both academic and pastoral support are logged and dealt with according to a procedure for processing students' queries, which ensures effective recording, monitoring and resolving of necessary actions. A sample of queries is followed up to monitor the quality of service which students receive. Informal support outside timetabled sessions is valued by the students. Email and telephone communication enable students to contact their tutors outside formal lesson time and staff are very willing to support their students. In addition, part of each timetabled lecture is set aside for individual student support. Support with the English language is available for students on request. The team considers that the nature of personal and academic student support provided by the College is comprehensive and effective, and that it represents good practice.

2.11 An induction day provides students with comprehensive information on facilities and administrative processes. External speakers explain the local area, businesses, community facilities, and cultures. Students also receive a programme handbook, which gives full details

of their programme, timetable, rules and regulations that apply to their studies. They are also made aware of the College's policy on plagiarism and this is reinforced regularly in teaching sessions.

2.12　　There is an effective system for electing student representatives to each programme and level of study. The student representative role, for which training is given, is to liaise with staff, represent their programme, and attend appropriate formal meetings. These meetings provide students with an effective forum for giving views on all aspects of their programmes, including academic, social and pastoral issues. The student representation arrangements work well, link coherently with the College's quality assurance processes, lead to an effective level of student involvement across the provision and are considered by the team to be good practice.

2.13　　The College places considerable emphasis on student employability and social responsibility, and has articulated these values in its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. Examples of how these values are achieved include participation by students in a range of structured community events, such as neighbourhood watch schemes and fund-raising events. Students are also encouraged to take up volunteering and other similar roles which contribute to the development of social skills and respect for others. Students confirm that the College's active engagement with community and social responsibility initiatives is appreciated and valued, and leads to individual autonomy and increased confidence. The team considers the provision of these initiatives and their successful integration with students' programmes of learning to represent good practice.

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

2.14　　A staff development policy sets out the College's learning and development objectives. Although staff development participation is recorded, there is currently no formal monitoring of how it meets the objectives of the policy. Development needs are identified by staff appraisals, staff induction, lesson observations and surveys. A number of events have been held in the last academic year, mainly focused on the awarding organisations' requirements, and some have been devoted to teaching and learning. Most staff development is organised on an informal basis and there is no systematic identification or planning for development related to maintaining and improving the quality of the student learning experience. A scholarly activity policy aims to widen research-based approaches to teaching and learning. Lecturing staff are encouraged to undertake activities which enhance their professional and academic knowledge through, for example, gaining extra qualifications, writing academic papers and contributing to journals. The team considers it desirable that the College should consider a more systematic arrangement for the planning of staff development.

2.15　　The College has set a target that all teaching staff should hold a formal teaching qualification by the end of 2012. Half of the current number of teaching staff are working towards a qualification and half already hold one. An annual Excellence in Teaching Award is presented to outstanding teachers; this is valued and staff commented that it is an effective motivator in improving their practice.

How effectively does the provider ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes?

2.16　　Resources for particular programmes are initially identified at programme approval and appropriate texts and reading lists are recommended by the awarding organisations. A range of journals, primarily used by postgraduate level students and lecturers for research

purposes, is available through an online learning resource. The College also encourages students to use local libraries, a useful facility for students who live some distance away. In addition to their main programme, students are offered an effective induction course, run over a number of weeks, which introduces them to a number of study skills, for example the use of the Harvard system for referencing texts in assessments. There is appropriate provision for students with physical disabilities, including ramp access to buildings, disabled car parking and lifts.

2.17   The virtual learning environment is a valuable resource for students and is used widely by staff and students across the programmes. All lecture notes, companion slides and module guides are posted electronically. The virtual learning environment is an effective repository for documents but is not currently an interactive teaching and learning resource. The team considers it desirable that the College should take steps to develop greater interactivity in virtual learning environment applications to enhance student learning.

> The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

3   Public information

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

3.1   The College publishes a range of useful information about its higher education provision. Public information includes: the prospectus, website, student handbook, programme specifications, and module guides. Some of this information is distributed to agents who recruit students in overseas countries on the College's behalf.

3.2   The College also manages a number of social networking sites. These provide updates to students on key events. Information such as lecture notes and module guides are made available to students through the virtual learning environment to which all students have access. Overall, the College's information is well presented and effective in communicating to students and stakeholders.

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

3.3   Through its College-wide Review of Quality Assurance (CROQA) and self-evaluation activity the College has recognised the importance of public information. A public information policy identifies a set of principles for publishing information, defines management responsibilities and describes a clear process by which information is produced, approved and published. Information to be published is produced by the relevant department and then approved by a senior manager within that section. This is documented through an information approval form which is submitted to the administration department for additional checks prior to approval and publication. The student support and marketing lead has ultimate responsibility for public information. The College maintains a public information register that details the information being published and the approving managers.

3.4   A formal contract is agreed with overseas recruitment agents. This requires that all publicity material and course information either be supplied directly by the College or be approved by the College prior to publication. The College has ceased working with an agent as a result of a breach of this element of the contract.

3.5   Information that is supplied to students through the virtual learning environment currently consists of module guides and lecture slides, which are produced prior to commencement of each semester by lecturing staff, who submit the information to the academic department for review and approval. Once approved, the information is uploaded to the virtual learning environment. Students comment favourably about the information uploaded so far.

3.6   Student handbooks are supplied to all students at the commencement of their studies. The administration department oversees the production of the handbook, but the sections are produced and approved within the departmental management structure.

3.7   Programme specifications are in line with QAA guidance. Content is taken from the published awarding organisations' information and they are approved in line with the public information policy. The Facebook and Twitter accounts are updated by a current student, who is supervised by the student support and marketing lead.

3.8   The effectiveness of the policy is reviewed through public information review meetings and by seeking the opinions of students. At the time of the review, only one review meeting had been held. However, students are very positive about information provided to them. They state that the website has been effective in providing them with useful information about courses and that this had helped them to make an informed choice. This is further supported by positive evidence from a recent student survey.

3.9   Although ad hoc reviews are undertaken by senior managers, the College does not currently have a formal quality assurance audit of the information it publishes. Additionally, there are no formal quality checks on the information published by the overseas agents. During the review a number of variances were identified between the website and the prospectus. These have since been corrected by the College. The team considers that the College should develop an appropriate quality assurance review mechanism to ensure the continued currency and accuracy of its public information. This should encompass all information issued to and produced by overseas agents.

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

Action plan[3]

London College of Business Management and Information Technology action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight February 2012						
Good practice	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The review team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
• the appointment of two external academic members to the Academic Standards Board brings a significant degree of external advice, expertise and reference to the College (paragraph 1.10)	Maintain appointment of external members with forward/ succession planning for new members as required	Continuing Review of membership in 2013 Meetings as per terms of reference	Corporate Affairs Director assisted by Senior Quality Assurance Lead	Membership of Academic Standards Board Meetings held and degree of input from Academic Standards Board (according to the Academic Standards Board terms of reference)	CEO/Principal and the Advisory Board should be kept informed	The Academic Standards Board Minutes showing effectiveness of oversight by the external academic members
• comprehensive and effective arrangements for both academic and pastoral student	Maintain the implementation of current suite of policies	Continuing Training as per semester calendar - once a semester	Administration Director, Administration Manager, and Human	Efficient dealing with student queries and needs	Corporate Affairs Director and Student Support and Experience	Enhancement of student satisfaction scores to above 90 per cent

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

support enable students to develop (paragraph 2.10)	Monitor feedback from Staff-Student Liaison Group and Student Support and Experience Committee meetings and surveys for ideas for improvements Continued training of support staff and lecturers	(next one September 2012) Surveys as per semester calendar - end of each semester	Resources Manager	Student feedback through minutes of Staff-Student Liaison Group and Student Support and Experience Committee meetings, survey and focus group results	Committee	Implementation of action points from Staff-Student Liaison Group and Student Support and Experience Committee meeting minutes Reports on training reported
• effective arrangements for student representation enable and promote student participation in quality assurance arrangements and ensure strong student involvement across the provision (paragraph 2.12)	Maintain the implementation of current policies Student Representatives Elections to be held every year for posts where required Hold Staff-Student Liaison Group and Student Support and Experience Committee meetings, including a discussion of quality matters, and those College initiatives that affect students	Continuing/Ongoing Societies from September 2012	Administration Manager, Student Support and Marketing Lead	Student feedback through minutes of Staff-Student Liaison Group and Student Support and Experience Committee meetings, survey and focus group results Increase in student voice through suggestions etc	Corporate Affairs Director and Administration Manager Faculties Board and Academic Standards Board to monitor	Review of effectiveness of structure of student representation to be concluded by December 2012, including implementation of targeted actions

	Conduct surveys for ideas for improvements Introduction of student societies next semester (from September 2012) Continued student representation in Academic Standards Board If possible, enable students to work/engage in some shape or form with external bodies (for example QAA) to build on their understanding of quality matters					
• the involvement of students in community and social responsibility activities enhances their learning experience and helps to develop employability and social skills	Maintain the implementation of current policies Increase in Executive Lecture Series type events Capitalising more on the network of the College's umbrella	Review overall effectiveness as part of Statement of Graduate Attributes review in 2012 annual report Next Executive Lecture Series event from September 2012	Corporate Affairs Director and Administration Manager	Increased numbers of students volunteering Student feedback through minutes of Staff-Student Liaison Group and Student	Corporate Affairs Director and Administration Manager Overall Review by CEO	Annual Report for each year Executive Lecture Series Reports

(paragraph 2.13).	body, and offer more volunteering opportunities to students Build ties with more community groups/ organisations and arrange student trips to these places, including charities, council chambers, and so on Continue with Social Responsibility Week, analysing case studies and holding competitions/events during every semester Engage more with large corporations for students to learn Corporate Social Responsibility in Practice Offer some form of accreditation to students that complete the volunteering or social responsibility	and then March 2013 Building relationship with big corporations - at least one by December 2012 Next Social Responsibility Week in next semester from September 2012 Ongoing		Support and Experience Committee meetings, survey and focus group results Partnership with at least one large corporation, that is one of the FTSE 100 or 250 indices		

	activities Monitor feedback from Staff-Student Liaison Group and Student Support and Experience Committee meetings and surveys for ideas for improvements					
Advisable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:						
• review recruitment and admissions standards to ensure that they align with the demands of the programmes (paragraph 1.6)	Undertake thorough review of recruitment policy and practice and implement changes where needed (with inclusion of the awarding organisations where required) Consider the introduction of new entry interviews/tests Establish new targets for exam pass rates and	Within 2012 - applicable for February 2013 cohorts	Administration Director and Administration Manager	Successful completion of review Meeting the new targets	CEO/ Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee and Academic Standards Board as required by their minutes	As per normal practice, regular audit of admissions for every round/intake To be monitored by a report from the Administration Director and Administration Manager on admissions

	retention statistics and monitor profiles of courses in this respect					
• ensure the continued currency and accuracy of all public information (paragraph 3.9).	Full implementation of Policy Q33 and review its effectiveness by the end of 2012 Development of social media section of Policy Q33 to apply website conditions to social media Regular formal checks on social media sites in the same manner as main website with any anomalies registered on a log Fees Information - adopt the same approach currently used in the prospectus There must be only one page for Fees Information, thus	Continuing Draft new policy section - Friday 11 June 2012 Regular formal checks during term time (no less than on a fortnight basis, and where possible on a weekly basis; alternatively as and when anomaly noticed through general updating of the website and social site)	Student Support and Marketing Lead	Target of NO errors or inconsistencies in public information All out of date material removed Any anomalies identified to record on register Checks being completed and Information Approval forms being completed	Administration Manager and Administration Director	Minutes of the Public Information Review Meetings each semester, which includes review of policy implementation and scrutiny of registers and approval forms Ongoing and continuous

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	individual course pages should not contain course fees This allows an efficient and more accurate update These pages must refer (prospective) students to the Fees Page					
Desirable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **desirable** for the provider to:						
• strengthen the role of the formal committee structure when reviews of quality assurance and enhancement occur (paragraph 1.4)	Continued implementation of current structure Ensure planned review on the effectiveness of the committee structure at end of 2012	Review - December 2012	Senior Quality Assurance Lead to report	Effective operation of quality assurance infrastructure Programme events/meetings taking place to consider specific course proposals	Academics Director and CEO for implementation Academic Standards Board for review	Implementation of actions from meetings of committee structure Incorporated into 2012 Annual Report
• consider establishing specific programme review events to ensure	Hold specific programme events for new programme approvals, and make additions to the	Plans to be developed for effect in the next academic semester from September	Academic Registry	All programme approvals and reviews thoroughly justified and	Academics Manager, Faculties Board and Academic Standards	Minutes of Programme Review Events Report to

that sufficient scrutiny is given to programme approval (paragraph 1.7)	policies in Quality Handbook To be formally part of the above review at the end of 2012	2012 Programme review events as per new course developments		documented	Board	Faculties Board and Academic Standards Board Incorporated into Annual Reports each year
• develop and publish an overarching set of precepts and expectations about assuring quality and standards (paragraph 1.9)	To review the Academic Infrastructure and the developing UK Quality Code for Higher Education with regards to incorporation into the Quality Handbook as part of the review of the Quality Assurance Committee structure by December 2012 Existing policies to make further explicit references to relevant precepts Ensure training of relevant staff in line with updated Quality Handbook	December 2012	Senior Quality Assurance Lead	Successful updating and/or creating of new policies Successful implementation of updated/new policies Successful training for relevant members of staff Review and approval by Faculties Board and Academic Standards Board	Academic and Corporate Affairs Director, Academics Manager, Faculties Board and Academic Standards Board	Report to Academic Standards Board Training reports Incorporated into Annual Reports each year

| develop a more systematic arrangement for the planning of staff development (paragraph 2.14) | Full and formal implementation of existing policies and review effectiveness by end 2012

Ensure a Staff Development Calendar is completed ahead of each semester (across all departments, including admissions, student support, marketing, quality) with clear mapping to Staff Learning Objectives

Ensure implementation of current staff development plans, for example Preparing for Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) and Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector for those that already have PTLLS | Immediate plans for effect in the next academic semester from September 2012 | Academics Manager and Human Resources Manager | Metrics of staff recruitment and training

Achievement of PTLLS as a minimum as for all academic staff by February 2013 | Academics Director | Staff Development Calendars

Training Reports

Lead Quality Assurance report and Annual Report |
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	Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector will be available for those who successfully achieve the previous two qualifications Continue to meet standards Investor in People Bronze					
• further develop the virtual learning environment as a genuinely interactive teaching and learning resource (paragraph 2.17).	Fully implement the student portal/virtual learning environment draft policies/guides related to its use, review and maintenance Particular use of quizzes/exams (and possibly lecturers to mark and give feedback via virtual learning environment), live discussion boards, videos, to be made live on virtual learning environment from next academic semester	Draft immediate and medium term plans for effect beginning with the next academic semester from February 2013	Administration Manager and Student Support and Marketing Lead	Increased access and use by students and faculty, particularly for quizzes, exams, discussion boards Student feedback through sessions and surveys Academic staff feedback	Administration Director and Academics Manager Faculties Board and Academic Standards Board	Report on usage and students/staff feedback

	Continue to identify ways of enhancing the use of virtual learning environment Feedback sessions with students and staff on the virtual learning environment for evaluation purposes				

About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk.

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/tier-4.

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the *Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook*[4]

Academic Infrastructure Guidance developed and agreed by the higher education community and published by QAA, which is used by institutions to ensure that their courses meet national expectations for academic standards and that students have access to a suitable environment for learning (academic quality). It consists of four groups of reference points: the **frameworks for higher education qualifications**, the **subject benchmark statements**, the **programme specifications** and the **Code of practice**. Work is underway (2011-12) to revise the Academic Infrastructure as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

academic quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, institutions manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards The standards set and maintained by institutions for their courses and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

awarding body A body with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the **framework for higher education qualifications**, such as diplomas or degrees.

awarding organisation An organisation with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework for England and Northern Ireland (these qualifications are at levels one to eight, with levels four and above being classed as 'higher education').

Code of practice *The Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, published by QAA: a set of interrelated documents giving guidance for higher education institutions.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed to perform a particular function.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

enhancement Taking deliberate steps at institutional level to improve the quality of **learning opportunities**. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

feature of good practice A positive aspect of the way a higher education institution manages quality and standards, which may be seen as exemplary to others.

framework A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks:

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[4] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and *The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland.*

highly trusted sponsor An education provider that the UK government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

learning opportunities The provision made for students' learning, including planned **programmes of study**, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios) and staff development.

learning outcome What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

operational definition A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reports.

programme (of study) An approved course of study which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

programme specifications Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **programmes of study**, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

provider An institution that offers courses of higher education, typically on behalf of a separate **awarding body or organisation**. In the context of REO, the term means an independent college.

public information Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

quality See **academic quality**.

subject benchmark statement A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

threshold academic standard The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications frameworks. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

widening participation Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.