Guildhall College

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

March 2012

Key findings about Guildhall College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in March 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 for Tourism and Hospitality Executives, Edexcel and the University of Wales, Newport.

The team also considers that there can be **limited confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives and Edexcel. 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 the University of Wales, Newport.

The team considers that **reliance cannot** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the provider is responsible for publishing about itself for the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executive and Edexcel programmes it delivers. 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 for the University of Wales, Newport programme.

Good practice

The team did not identify any good practice.

Recommendations

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

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

- develop and implement a coherent and comprehensive strategy for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities (paragraphs 2.1 and 2.13 to 2.16)
- analyse the reasons for the low completion rates to support the management and enhancement of learning opportunities (paragraph 2.4)
- improve the opportunities available to HND students to achieve higher grades than Pass (paragraph 2.5)
- conduct a rigorous review of the accuracy and appropriateness of all web-based information (paragraphs 3.1 to 3.6)
- review procedures for the effective management of the accuracy and completeness of its public information (paragraph 3.7 to 3.9).

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

- systematically record the minutes and action plans arising from the deliberations of all academic committees, including relevant meetings of the Senior Management Team (paragraphs 1.1 to 1.8)
- finalise the development of the learning and teaching strategy (paragraph 2.9)
- develop a more robust teaching observation scheme (paragraph 2.10).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Guildhall College (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 Tourism and Hospitality Management, Edexcel and the University of Wales, Newport. The review was carried out by Ms Helen Corkill, Mr Jonathan Doney, Mr Philip Price (reviewers) and Mr Philip Markey (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 its awarding bodies, such as external examiner reports and annual reviews. Evidence was also gathered from meetings with staff and students and from the scrutiny of samples of student work.

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

- The Academic Infrastructure
- Edexcel HND Programme Handbook
- Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives.

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

Guildhall College is a privately owned institution established in May 2003. It is located in the Whitechapel area of London. The College was founded on the belief that globalisation and rapid development of information and communication technologies have created opportunities for providing academic and professional programmes for students. There are 392 full-time international students and 45 part-time staff.

At the time of the review, the College offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding bodies with full-time equivalent students (FTEs) in brackets.

Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives

- Postgraduate Diploma in Health Care Management (79)

Edexcel

- HND Business (89)
- HND Computing and Systems Development (43)
- HND Health and Social Care (7)
- HND Travel and Tourism (28)
- Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership (85)

University of Wales, Newport

- MSc Information Technology Management (final intake in 2011) (61)

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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.

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College currently works with Edexcel, the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives and the University of Wales, Newport (the University). The Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives and the University provide the curricula. The College sets and marks its own assessments for Edexcel programmes and shares the assessment for the MSc Information Technology Management with the University. The College is responsible for the learning and teaching, learning resources, student support, staff development, and public information for all awards.

Recent developments

The College started by offering professional qualifications in accountancy, business and law. These programmes were later withdrawn. In 2009, it decided to offer degree level programmes awarded by the Universities of East London and Gloucestershire. It also decided to offer an MSc Information Technology Management, franchised from the University of Wales, Newport. In 2011, the College and the Universities of East London and Gloucestershire agreed to end the relationship in an organised way, limiting the impact on students. The relationship with the University of Wales, Newport was also reviewed following the reorganisation of the University and recruitment to the MSc ceased.

Changes in regulations for admitting international students has resulted in a significant reduction in student numbers in the last year. The College has therefore reduced its accommodation and resources by moving to smaller premises. This included putting most of its library stock in storage and making staff redundant. It has also decided to concentrate on HNDs from Edexcel and the award from the Association of Tourism and Hospitality Executives.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the team. With the help of the College, students completed a questionnaire based on a range of themes such as learning and teaching, resources, assessment, and support. This was organised by three student representatives. The submission concentrated on the Edexcel programmes. There was no submission from students on the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives or the MSc programmes.

There was a low response rate to the submission from students on the Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership, with just four out of 55 students completing the questionnaire. The main criticisms were the need for more guidelines on assignment preparation and on the speed of the learning which tended to focus on cramming and 'forced absorption' of the material. There were some comments about the library and the facilities which had been mentioned in the recruiting brochures, but which were no longer available in the College. The responses from HND students (55 out 95) were more positive, with the majority of students expressing satisfaction with their learning experiences.

In their meeting with the team, students were asked about these areas, especially as they related to the move to a different and smaller building and the storage of library books. They provided more positive responses, saying that the College had attempted to resolve the issues raised, such as the problems of cramming a module into six weeks and the reopening of some limited library facilities. The submission noted that the College is undergoing a transition, but it is doing its best to provide effective learning opportunities for students.

Detailed findings about Guildhall College

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 At programme level, there are effective processes for the management of academic standards. The Programme Delivery Manager for Edexcel programmes is efficient and provides strong leadership. Academic committees also take place at the programme level, with all relevant programme staff attending. They have no terms of reference but meetings are minuted. However, programme committees, chaired by programme leaders, are effective in managing standards of respective programmes.

1.2 Each programme produces thorough annual Review and Enhancement Process reports which are considered by the relevant programme committee. Each report includes quantitative data on enrolment, assessment and achievement as well as student and assessor feedback. Reports are reviewed by the College's Senior Management Team, but there are no records of this taking place. In 2010, the College produced a thorough and detailed spreadsheet which tracked each programme's progress in the quality process. This practice was not repeated in 2011 or 2012.

1.3 However, at College level, the processes are less effective. The College's Quality Manual is intended to be the overarching operational document for the management of academic standards. However, it is out of date and does not fully relate to the existing systems for managing academic standards at the College.

1.4 The College structure for the management of academic standards is in development and there is little evidence of the component parts working cohesively in practice. Academic delivery within the College is overseen and managed by the Head of Academic Programmes who reports to the Vice Principal, who is currently also Acting Principal. The Head of Academic Programmes is currently employed by the College for two days a week, making continued oversight of academic standards difficult. The Head of Academic Programmes manages two Programme Delivery Managers, each of whom is responsible for a cluster of programmes. Programme and Module Leaders and a Programme Administrator provide the operational management of the provision.

1.5 There is some confusion in the titles, terms of reference and practices of the College's committee and reporting structure. There is an Academic Committee, also known as the Academic Meeting. There are no terms of reference and no indication of how often they meet.

1.6 The College's self-evaluation also refers to an Academic Regulations Committee which has irregular meetings and includes registry and student representation. There is also reference in the Quality Manual to a Professional Development Committee, but neither this nor the Academic Regulations Committee appear to operate in practice.

1.7 A new Quality Assurance Committee with specific and written terms of reference was added to the quality processes in March 2012, the same month as the review visit. It has clear terms of reference, but for such a significant committee it will only meet annually. There are minutes from its first formal session in March 2012. The College intends the Quality Assurance Committee to be the forum for the sharing of good practice between Programme Delivery Managers.

1.8   While management of academic standards at programme level is effective, the formal oversight at senior level is insufficiently deliberative. The Senior Management Team meets weekly to oversee the provision and to review reports from the other committees. Senior Management Team meetings, also referred to as Board Meetings, are not formally recorded. The only records are those held in individual emails. As such, there is no firm evidence how the management of academic standards takes place at College level. There is no overarching operational strategy in which management responsibilities are clearly defined and against which the effectiveness of management is evaluated. The team considers that it is advisable for the College to record the minutes and action plans arising from the deliberations of all academic committees, including relevant meetings of the Senior Management Team.

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

1.9   The College makes informed use of a range of external reference points to manage the standards of its academic provision. This is more apparent in the MSc programme from the University of Wales, Newport. The College's detailed annual monitoring report for the MSc programme refers to the use of external benchmarks. The external examiner's report for the HND Business programmes stated that the College meets the expectations of the Academic Infrastructure. Teaching staff demonstrate some awareness of the Academic Infrastructure. For example, the external examiner confirmed that reference is made to subject benchmark statements and relevant sections of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, particularly *Section 6: Assessment of students*. The particular requirements of Edexcel and the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives are also taken into account. Programme, module and student handbooks are produced in line with the particular requirements of the awarding organisations.

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

1.10   There are robust processes for the internal verification of assessments in all programmes. Programme teams are diligent in the setting of assignments, providing assignment briefs and ensuring these are set at the required level for the awards. The College has robust systems in place for the organisation and recording of the internal verification of its higher education awards. Internal verifiers are given training, have clear role descriptions, and are provided with a verifier's handbook.

1.11   The College is externally reviewed on an annual basis by Edexcel and the University of Wales, Newport. The programme with the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives is new and the provision has yet to be reviewed. Programme teams produce thorough annual reports both for Edexcel and for the University, including evaluations of assessment. For the MSc programme, the quality of double marking and moderation are commented on favourably in the annual review. College staff attend examination boards and communication between the two institutions is effective.

1.12   The Assessment and Award Boards for Edexcel programmes are conducted with efficiency and thoroughness. Referrals are carefully considered and their progress recorded. The Boards noted concerns about academic malpractice, referencing, high referral rates, and poor attendance. Programme teams have put in place procedures to detect plagiarism and have informed students of the penalties for academic malpractice.

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 bodies and organisation.

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 College does not wholly fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities. Paragraphs 1.1 to 1.8 identify issues in the management of academic standards. These also apply to the management and enhancement of learning opportunities. With the exception of the MSc programme with the University of Wales, Newport, there are other matters which the team identified which indicate that the College is not effectively managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities. These include the quality of learning and teaching, low completion rates and the low level of achievement of students (see paragraphs 2.3 to 2.10). The team considers it essential that the College develop and implement a coherent and comprehensive strategy for the management of learning opportunities.

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

2.2 Paragraph 1.9 describes how the College, through its awarding bodies and organisation, uses external reference points.

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

2.3 There is no coherent and embedded learning and teaching strategy which addresses the particular learning needs of students. The College's approach to teaching and learning was broadly outlined in two documents. However, it was not clear what the overall approach to teaching and learning was, or whether it had been shared with staff and implemented fully.

2.4 The College provides detailed progression and completion rates for all its programmes. However, there are high referral and low completion rates for the HND Business and HND Computing programmes. There is also an issue with late submission of assignments. The Programme Leader's Overview Report, which forms part of the Review and Enhancement Process Report, suggests that students from a non-English speaking background find it difficult to write assignments. The report also identifies that lecturers should move from lecturing to teaching, to give students one-to-one attention and to encourage the development of academic skills. The report also suggests that low completion rates correspond with low student evaluations of teaching. The team regards these matters as relevant to the need for a learning and teaching strategy to meet the needs of students. The team considers that it is essential for the College to analyse the reasons for the low completion rates to support the management and enhancement of learning opportunities.

2.5 The College stated that most HND students work for a Pass grade and are not motivated to aim for Merit or Distinction grades. The external examiner also states that 'students appear to be working to Pass standard only'. On the HND Business programme, the majority of students only achieve a Pass grade for their modules. It is essential for the

College to improve the opportunities available to HND students to achieve higher grades than Pass. The College should address this in its learning and teaching strategy

2.6   Teaching on the Extended Diploma in Strategic Management programme has been condensed from 10 to six weeks. This resulted in what the students described as the speed of learning focusing on cramming and 'forced absorption' of the material. Students confirmed that they found this an impediment to their learning. It is advisable for the College to finalise the development of the learning and teaching strategy. Among other things, this would include policies for staff development, teaching observation and appraisal.

2.7   By April 2012, the College expected all teaching staff to have a minimum teaching qualification. However, staff records show that approximately half of the teaching staff in the College have a recognised teaching qualification. The remaining staff are not listed as currently pursuing teaching qualifications. The Programme and Enhancement Review identifies plans to encourage staff to take teaching qualifications but no statement is made relating to the level and appropriateness of qualifications required in the Staff Handbook. The external examiner for the HND Business notes that while staff are academically well qualified, only 25 per cent in this programme have teaching qualifications.

2.8   At the end of every module, the College asks students to provide feedback on the quality of staff teaching using a scoring system with 5.0 as the maximum. Members of staff whose averaged score is less than a benchmark of 3.5 may have their teaching contracts terminated. The Staff Handbook does not describe this process or its potential outcomes. There is a mid-semester survey of students' views, and issues raised are considered at the Programme Committee Meeting. Minutes from this are published on the student notice board.

2.9   Teaching observations and peer reviews are conducted every term. A designated programme delivery manager organises these and selects an appropriate observer from the management or teaching staff. Reviews are recorded on a standardised observation form. Outcomes from reviews should inform the annual appraisal of staff by the Human Resources Manager. This process should be monitored by the Professional Development Committee. However, there is no evidence how observations and appraisals contribute to an identification of staff development activity or training. The scheme does not include how good practice can be disseminated. The team considers it advisable that the College develops a more robust teaching observation scheme.

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

2.10   There is no structured approach to staff development or for the identification of staff training needs. The College is aware that staff need to be given training on methods of delivery. All new staff have an induction programme and are mentored by a senior member of staff. All members of staff are encouraged to attend external continuous professional development events but staff are responsible for their own arrangements for doing this. This process is not formalised and appropriate updating of staff development is carried out on an irregular basis. While the College recognises that there should be increased opportunities for staff development and scholarly activity among its staff, the significant downsizing of the institution has meant that the College is reconsidering ways to enhance staff development. While some record is kept of continuous professional development, it is largely left to individual teaching staff to enhance their qualifications and developments.

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

2.11   The College provides students with academic and personal support, although this is largely on an informal basis. Students receive a helpful induction programme on arrival at the College. They receive programme handbooks that include guidance notes from their awarding body. All students are allocated a personal tutor. Staff use either timetabled teaching sessions to conduct tutorials or offer guidance to students on demand through, for example, communicating through the College's portal. No tutorial records are kept. Despite this, the students felt that they are adequately supported and that, generally, staff are readily available and helpful. Students confirmed that staff can be approached for further one-to-one tutorials should they be required. Pastoral support is provided by the Student Welfare Officer. Students are advised where to find appropriate help outside the College. Although there is no formal screening of students, the identification of additional learning support needs for students is undertaken by the teaching staff.

2.12   Support for students for assessment feedback is timely and helpful. The external examiner for the HND Business programme identifies written feedback as an area for improvement. Samples of student work scrutinised by the team found a few instances of inadequate and illegible feedback. However, at programme level, action has been taken to revise the feedback sheet to make more room for comments and to encourage staff to word-process feedback.

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

2.13   The College does not have a learning resources strategy. The Head of Academic Programmes is responsible for ensuring that appropriate learning resources are in place. There is reliance on programme leaders and teaching teams to request additional purchasing to ensure that adequate resources are available. The absence of an overall learning resource policy has lead to an incoherent approach to the provision of learning resources.

2.14   As a result of the College's move to new accommodation, the amount of space available for the library has been significantly reduced. A majority of the book stock has been moved to storage and consequently only a small number of books are available for students to use. These are not allowed to be removed from the library. The College has negotiated arrangements with local suppliers for students to buy books at a discount. Students were concerned about library provision, but stated that despite the large reduction in books, they did not feel their studies were being compromised. To compensate, staff were distributing additional learning material, mainly in hard copy form, to support them. More books could be accommodated in the new library space and the College is considering how this can be achieved.

2.15   The students are positive about their experiences with the virtual learning environment, which is intended to provide an additional resource for students. It contains generic programme information, some unit and programme handbooks, and links to online e-book repositories. However, the team found that it was largely empty and the programmes that were cited by students as containing easily accessible information contained nothing. The College informed the team that material available in the previous semester had recently been removed and archived. It was no longer available to students at the time of the review.

2.16   Material for the virtual learning environment originates from programme teams and is passed to an administrator for uploading. The College is in the process of reviewing and

improving this procedure with a view to introducing detailed requirements of staff for uploading programme material. This includes establishing minimum document requirements, version control and the point at which documents are removed or archived. The team consider this to be a positive step forward in the management of the virtual learning environment.

2.17   Students on the MSc programme have access to online resources from the University. As such they have been less affected by the reduction in library and virtual learning environment facility. They were very positive about the support they received from the University. They cited their use of the College's virtual learning environment but again, when scrutinised, the team found no uploaded documents for their programme.

The review team has **limited confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students on the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives and Edexcel programmes.

It has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for its students on the MSc Information Technology Management programme with the University of Wales, Newport.

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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 is not effective in communicating public information. The College no longer produces printed information but relies solely on its website for its prospectus and programme leaflets for students and other stakeholders. The College website contains basic information about its programmes, studying in the UK, facilities and resources to support student learning, and social well-being. The front page offers access to the e-learning facility and student Notice Board areas.

3.2   During the review visit, changes were made to the website to update information about the availability and start dates of certain programmes. In the week prior to the visit, the Student Handbook had been updated and other general changes made to the website. Two web versions of the handbook were available at the time of the visit.

3.3   There are a number of claims on the website about the learning opportunities and resources at the College that could not be substantiated. For example, the College claims to have excellent modern facilities including a library with a wide range of materials and information relevant to all College programmes. Additionally it claims to have 'large state of the art classrooms available for teacher-led classes and group studies'. However, students reported that the current library, classrooms and other learning facilities did not match the descriptions conveyed by the promotional material.

3.4   The website omitted information about one programme on offer, but was corrected at the visit. In some instances, acronyms were used without explanations or appropriate references. The website stated that the College offers English support classes given by dedicated, experienced and qualified native speakers. However, the College acknowledged that the English support facility is no longer available.

3.5   There is no information about College fees on the website. It is difficult to identify through published information a point of contact at the College to gain information about fees.

3.6   The publicly accessible Notice Board page of the website contains students' results for modules, listing the students' ID number and in some cases their name, grades and re-sit results. Some results also included assessor names, their comments on assessed work, and reasons for non-completion. It is inappropriate to publish such detailed information about individual achievement in this way. It is essential for the College to conduct a rigorous review of the accuracy and appropriateness of all web-based information.

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

3.7   The College arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information it publishes about itself are unclear and ineffective. There are many instances of inaccuracies and incompleteness regarding this information. Public information such as the prospectus, leaflets, the student handbook, and programme handbooks are developed by a range of staff, including the Head of Academic Programmes, Head of Student Management Systems and Academic Services, or other academic or student services staff.

3.8   There is a policy on the production of public information which was updated in November 2011. The procedure for ensuring the quality of documents includes a review by an independent person nominated by the Senior Management Team. The section of the policy on website materials does not specifically refer to management processes for public information. It contains technical details referring to the structure of web-based information and statements aimed at undefined persons or bodies to keep materials up to date. The policy makes no specific reference to the need for accuracy or completeness of information. The marketing team has responsibility for the production of design and distribution of leaflets in conjunction with the Head of Academic Programmes. The team could find no assurances that these processes take place.

3.9   The self-evaluation states the Student Handbook has been subject to vigorous internal and external verification and approval by the Senior Management Team. The team found many examples of the contents of the Student Handbook being either inaccurate, out of date or inappropriately claiming to exist at the current premises or within the resource base at the College. The management processes specified for assuring the accuracy of information, as specified in the handbook, for the Student Handbook had not been thoroughly followed. It is essential for the College to review procedures for the effective management of the accuracy and completeness of its public information.

The team concludes that **reliance cannot be placed** on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the provider is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers for the Association for Tourism and Hospitality Executives and Edexcel.

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 for the MSc Information Technology Management programme with the University of Wales, Newport.

Action plan[3]

Guildhall College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight March 2012						
Essential	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **essential** for the provider to:						
• develop and implement a coherent and comprehensive strategy for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities (paragraphs 2.1 and 2.13 to 2.16)	Combine policies and procedure regarding learning opportunities and maintenance of academic standards, into a comprehensive quality manual. A new quality committee, attended by the Head of Academics, should be established that will meet on a monthly basis during the compilation of this manual. The committee should report back to the Senior Management Team and raise any issues. After September 2012 the Quality Committee will be meeting on a quarterly basis to	Initial Manual due end of August 2012. Quarterly reviews ongoing	Head of Academics	Guidelines published in Quality Manual for Teaching and Learning Strategy, evidence in academic and management meeting notes that strategy is followed	Acting Principal	Successful review by Management Committee and external consultant

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[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 body and organisations.

	review the implementation and discuss any additional changes.				
• analyse the reasons for the low completion rates to support the management and enhancement of learning opportunities (paragraph 2.4)	Collection and analysis of completion data should be done an a quarterly basis. The impact of skills, like language ability and previous education should be highlighted and feedback given to the recruitment team. The summary of the analysis should form an discussion point during the next Quality Committee Meeting	End of August 2012 and ongoing	Head of Academics and Programme Leaders	Analysis report (with suggested actions) that can be handed to Management Committee	Acting Principal	Successful review by Management Committee and external consultant
• improve the opportunities available to HND students to achieve higher grades than Pass (paragraph 2.5)	As per above action point, the completion data should also used to be determine the skillsets of students that received better results and other students should be mentored to enable them to acquire the skills needed for higher grades. Additional workshops, a wider variety of	End of July 2012	Head of Academics and Programme Leaders	New guidelines for teachers and recruitment staff based on analysis	Acting Principal	Successful review by Management Committee and external consultant

	assessment methods and one to one mentoring will be made available to all students.					
• conduct a rigorous review of the accuracy and appropriateness of all web-based information (paragraphs 3.1 to 3.6)	Web site review should be done on every page and link	End of June 2012	Marketing Manager	All web-based information are accurate and give a clear realistic description of the college and qualifications information	Acting Principal	Web site should be reviewed by outside consultant with knowledge of the industry
• review procedures for the effective management of the accuracy and completeness of its public information (paragraph 3.7 to 3.9).	Schedule and conduct monthly sessions to review public information, including websites, learning management system, programme and module handbooks and any other marketing materials.	End of June 2012 and ongoing	Marketing Manager	All public information reviewed and new information approved for publishing	Acting Principal	Public information accurate and complete
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:						
• systematically record the minutes and action plans arising from the deliberations of all academic	Appoint person to take minutes and compile action plans during Senior Management Team meetings, Quality	End of June 2012	Acting Principal	Weekly meeting notes and action plans filed for every management meeting and	Acting Principal	Action plans show actions taken after meetings and follow up reports

committees, including relevant meetings of the Senior Management Team (paragraphs 1.1 to 1.8)	Committee meetings and any other academic or management meetings.			academic committee meetings		
• finalise the development of the learning and teaching strategy (paragraph 2.9)	Finalise, document and distribute guidelines for learning and teaching to all academic staff members by end of July. This should be monitored on a monthly basis by the Quality Committee and quarterly after September 2012.	End of August 2012	Head of Academics	Handbook for Learning and Teaching Strategy	Acting Principal	Feedback from Academic staff
• develop a more robust teaching observation scheme (paragraph 2.10).	The proposed methods of teaching reviews by an external reviewers should be planned and the schedule should be reviewed by the Quality Committee. The outcome of these reviews should be considered as part of the enhancement of learning opportunities.	End of August 2012	Head of Academics	Handbook for Learning and Teaching Strategy	Acting Principal	Feedback from Academic staff

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 1 to 8, with levels 4 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.

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