Bradford College of Management

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

January 2012

Key findings about Bradford College of Management

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in January 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 Chartered Certified Accountants, BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, Edexcel, and NCC Education.

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 this awarding body and organisations.

The team considers that **reliance can** be placed on the accuracy and/or 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 close and regular engagement between key staff in the College management team and tutors enables collective and consistent assurance of quality of provision (paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3)
- the close working relationship between students and staff engenders a positive and supportive environment focused on individual student needs, which adds value to their learning experience (paragraph 2.9)
- the responsive and effective leadership provided by the College management team, including excellent liaison with the students and teaching staff, enhances students' access to the learning resources (paragraph 2.13)
- the welcoming and helpful information for prospective international students provides a clear insight into study within the UK (paragraph 3.1).

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:

- ensure that its formal committees have appropriate powers and membership, and record and disseminate their decisions systematically (paragraph 1.3)
- refine the annual monitoring reports to monitor its course provision more effectively (paragraph 1.4)
- engage more formally and explicitly with relevant external reference points to ensure that full account is taken of recognised effective practice in the management of academic standards (paragraph 1.6)
- ensure that internal verification is applied consistently across the provision (paragraph 1.7)
- standardise the assessment feedback and internal verification procedures to ensure consistency of practice and provide an effective development tool to encourage students to achieve their full potential (paragraph 2.10)
- consider a centrally coordinated process for enhancing staff development activities to ensure that scholarly activity has a high priority (paragraph 2.12)

- review systematically its published information to ensure its accuracy, currency and appropriateness (paragraph 3.6)
- review its systems for managing its published information to ensure their effectiveness (paragraph 3.7).

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

- fully implement its specified policies and procedures (paragraph 1.2)
- formalise the existing process for the observation of teaching (paragraph 2.6)
- revise the student feedback questionnaire to ensure that student satisfaction levels can be measured for specific learning resources such as the library, computer facilities and teaching accommodation (paragraph 2.14)
- further develop a strategy for the virtual learning environment to ensure that a wide range of learning resources is consistently made available to students (paragraph 3.5).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight][1] (REO) conducted by [QAA] at Bradford College of Management (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 Chartered Certified Accountants, BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, Edexcel, and NCC Education. The review was carried out by Ms Maxina Butler-Holmes, Dr Colin Fryer, Mr Peter Green (reviewers) and Mr Robert Jones (coordinator). For the second visit Mr Paul Chamberlain replaced Dr Colin Fryer.

The review team conducted the initial review in January 2012 and returned to the College for a second visit in March 2012. It 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 body and organisations, a report from the Accreditation Service for International Colleges, and meetings with staff and students.

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

- the Academic Infrastructure
- the Qualifications and Credit Framework
- the regulations of its awarding body and organisations.

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

Bradford College of Management was established in November 2009 and admitted its first cohort of students in August 2010. There are currently 215 full-time students enrolled at the College. At present, they are all international students. The College is located in the centre of Bradford.

The College offers a range of courses, all at the higher education level. Its mission is 'to create and execute learning opportunities for current and future leaders and managers that will transform their futures, to communicate intellectually and socially with all people worldwide, to build deep, long-lasting relationships with its students, alumni and with each other, to differentiate the College from its competition clearly and persuasively, and to build best practice and cost efficiency into the College's management and operations.'

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

Edexcel
- Higher National Certificate/Diploma in Business
- Higher National Certificate/Diploma in Computing and Systems Development
- Extended Diploma in Business

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
- Certificated Accounting Technician
- Foundations in Accountancy

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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.

- Association of Chartered Certified Accountants - level 6
- Association of Chartered Certified Accountants - level 7

BCS The Chartered Institute for IT
- Certificate in Information Technology

NCC Education
- English Language Framework

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College has limited responsibility for academic standards, with primary responsibility being retained by its awarding body and organisations, subject to the College's participation in the assessment process of Edexcel and, to a lesser extent, of the NCC. All the awarding body and organisations have delegated responsibility to the College for the quality of the higher education it provides.

Recent developments

The first cohort of students obtained their qualifications in the summer of 2011. In October 2011, the College opened its new floor, increasing its total occupancy to three floors. A recent change in the managerial structure of the College has led to the appointment of a Vice-Principal, with responsibility for academic development, subject to the oversight of the Principal. The College plans to increase the number of courses that it offers. It is in the process of finalising arrangements to offer the level 6 course in management and leadership of the Chartered Management Institute.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. The College provided two facilitators who gathered the views of the students in two focus group meetings. This resulted in a comprehensive student submission, informed by the views of the students and endorsed by them, which was helpful to the review team. Representative students met the review coordinator at the preparatory meeting and the review team during the review visit. Both meetings were very productive.

Detailed findings about Bradford College of Management

1   Academic standards

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

1.1   The College management team is highly committed to the development of higher education. The College takes pride in its provision and is developing a strategic view. he College management structure, designed to support all aspects of course planning, delivery and assessment, reflects the requirements of the awarding body and organisations for assuring academic standards. The Vice-Principal is responsible for strategic development and managing physical resources; the Registrar is responsible for admissions and complaints; and the Director of Studies, who reports to the Vice-Principal, is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of academic staff. The Vice-Principal and the Registrar report to the Principal, who maintains relationships with the awarding body and organisations, and partner institutions.

1.2   In its portfolio of evidence, the College presented a number of policies and procedures as separate documents, and references to a range of policies were included in its comprehensive Strategic Plan (2010-21). They were, however, often very general and would benefit from contextualisation within the College structure. Given that it had only started operating in 2010, the College acknowledged that the majority of policies and procedures were in the process of being translated into academic activity and had not yet been fully implemented.

1.3   The College needs to review its committee structure. It has a number of committees, which play an important role in monitoring the academic provision. There is an advisory meeting of teaching staff which meets regularly. Its minutes, together with their action plans, inform management decision making. The minutes are informal and discursive, and provide a valuable insight into the views of teaching staff. However, this style of minute taking is also used for the College committees with decision-making powers, where a more formal style of record keeping would be more appropriate. For example, the Examination Board records the comments made by its members, but does not record the decisions it makes about the academic progress of individual students. Similarly, the Academic Committee needs to be more consistent when recording its decisions and should also systematically capture the actions taken to close the quality loop. Improving the quality of the minutes of meetings would demonstrate explicitly the central role of this committee in the maintenance of academic standards, and provide formal assurance at subsequent meetings that action was taken in response to decisions made at earlier meetings. The relative powers and formal membership of the different committees are sometimes not entirely clear. It is significant that the College does not have a chart illustrating the reporting structure of its committees, along the same lines as the clear chart it provides about its management team.

1.4   The College monitors course provision through annual monitoring reports. Samples were provided to demonstrate how it completed this task. The annual monitoring reports were completed on the basis of an elaborate form divided into a large number of sections, many of which were irrelevant to the College. The form omitted key areas such as student progression rates and the specification of action plans to address the issues that had been highlighted in the report. It is encouraging that the College has started using these reports, but it needs to refine them in order to monitor its course provision more effectively.

1.5   Teaching staff have a wide range of experience in the state and private sector and their qualifications are appropriate to deliver the courses of study. Most staff hold at least

a master's degree and some have a PhD or are in the process of undertaking doctoral research.

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

1.6   The College claims to use the Academic Infrastructure as a key reference point. In this, it is heavily reliant on its awarding body and organisations. Understandably, given the recent establishment of the College, it has not yet fully embedded all the relevant external reference points, including the Academic Infrastructure, into its internal procedures. Among the documentation sent to the review team before the visit, the College produced programme specifications that provided information on the award title, the awarding body and the structure of the programme, including module titles and level. However, they made no reference to the relevant subject benchmark statements, programme aims, intended learning outcomes or the means by which these outcomes are achieved and demonstrated. The College subsequently produced programme specifications that showed significant progress, but this needs to be built upon. As yet, the College does not map its activity against applicable sections of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*). Alignment with the appropriate level descriptors of *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) is not explicit in the documentation provided to students. It is important that the College takes full account of recognised effective practice in this area in order to assure academic standards.

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

1.7   The College needs to ensure that internal verification is applied consistently across the provision. For most of the courses, summative assessments are set and assessed entirely by the awarding body and organisations. In such courses, tutors at the College play no part in marking the work or setting the assignments. This gives confidence in the management of academic standards in that the awarding body and organisations are totally responsible for assessment. However, the College is responsible for assessment on the Edexcel courses where assessments are both summative and formative in nature. Currently, this is the major course in the College requiring internal verification. It also provides the academic staff at the College with a strong element of authority over the assessment of a course. The Edexcel external examiner expressed a number of concerns that the review team endorses. In some cases there was no evidence of internal verification; criteria for merit and distinction were not always appropriately contextualised; errors went undetected; and while clear and appropriate policies exist, attention needs to be paid to operationalising and communicating these policies as noted in paragraph 1.2. However, the external examiner also wrote that there was a genuine and clear commitment by the management of the College to overcome these difficulties. The review team was encouraged by the evidence it found that the College has begun the process of addressing the issues raised by the external examiner.

1.8   The review team examined student work drawn from courses validated by all the awarding body and organisations with which the College currently has an agreement. The College delivers appropriate assessment to the specified levels. However, from these assessments it appears that the students may not have been provided with clear learning outcomes. On the initiative of the Vice-Principal, the College has begun to introduce mock examinations as a means of preparing students for their summative assessments. This is a praiseworthy initiative but most of the examinations were of the same type, namely multiple

choice. The College may wish to reflect on the types of formative assessment that enable students to be tested across a range of assessment models.

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 body and 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 management structure described in paragraph 1.1 fully supports the delivery of learning opportunities.

2.2 The staffing structure is appropriate for the current student numbers and range of academic provision. At the course level, the Director of Studies carries the day-to-day responsibility for course delivery, including timetabling, assessment and examination arrangements, collating results, and liaising regularly with the Vice-Principal to provide updated reports. The academic provision is organised into four departments, within which there are small course teams led by course leaders. Members of the College management team are the heads of two departments and are also active course leaders, which strengthens the link between the management and academic functions of the College. There is a college-wide meeting of teachers once a month and the informative minutes of these meetings, together with their clear and comprehensive action plans, inform management decision making.

2.3 The College management team and teaching staff all work effectively together, through a process of regular formal and informal contact. The meeting of teachers, headed by the Vice-Principal, is an important forum for sharing ideas, reviewing students' progress, monitoring attendances and promoting reflective practice. The team saw many examples of the consistency with which teaching staff across the College follow up actions and address the needs of students. This enables effective collective management and the assurance of quality of learning opportunities. The nature and effectiveness of the close and regular engagements with the relevant staff make a significant contribution to this area.

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

2.4 As noted in paragraph 1.6, the College relies heavily on its awarding body and organisations to ensure that its provision is congruent with the Academic Infrastructure, as a key external reference point. As with academic standards, a more formal and explicit utilisation of the Academic Infrastructure would provide a further means of integrating and strengthening the College's oversight of the quality of learning opportunities.

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

2.5 The Academic Committee monitors and updates the Teaching and Learning Strategy, which places importance on the twin strands of quality enhancement and curriculum innovation. These strands are underpinned by the College's commitment to staff development, module and course design, the student voice, and student support and guidance. While the strategy relates to some College processes, for example student

induction and student consultation, no reference is made to other important aspects, for example staff development as noted in paragraph 2.12.

2.6   While the College operates an effective programme of lesson observations it could, with advantage, put this provision on a more formal basis. Tutors are observed once a term. The observations are thorough and offer helpful feedback to staff on good practice and areas for improvement. However, the Teaching and Learning Strategy and supporting documentation provided to staff, for example the Staff Development Handbook, makes no reference to the policy on staff development or its operation. The process would be strengthened if the information provided to academic staff made specific reference to the policy on teaching observations.

2.7   Generally, students report that the standard of teaching is good or better. Students have the opportunity to comment on all aspects of provision through teachers' evaluations, course questionnaires and staff-student meetings. The student submission cites examples of action taken in response to student feedback. For example, examination notices are now made available in classrooms and students have the opportunity to undertake mock examinations. Informal comments made by students at tutorials can also be dealt with as necessary because of the small number of students involved. The student meeting confirmed the view, expressed in the student submission, that students are satisfied with the quality of teaching and learning, and that issues raised are noted and acted upon promptly and effectively.

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

2.8   The College has appropriate systems in place to support students from admission through to the completion of their course. Application forms are reviewed by the Principal and Course Leader who assess the suitability of the candidate. Those applicants meeting the minimum requirements are interviewed by either the Principal or the Course Leader, or both. All first-year students have a well planned and comprehensive induction programme at the start of the course.

2.9   Students receive appropriate support for study at higher education level, which is strongly focused on the needs of the individual student and, therefore, adds value to their learning experience. There is a close working relationship between students and staff that engenders a positive and supportive learning environment. Students enthusiastically attest to the helpfulness and exceptional promptness of support from their tutors. The Edexcel external examiner concurs with this view on the basis of discussions with students. The College also offers support and personal care to students with disabilities. Additional learning needs are met by the Student Support Officer who assists with arranging personal tutors trained to deliver teaching to students with special needs.

2.10   There is room for improvement in the provision of assessment feedback to students. Tutors give assessment feedback in a variety of ways, including the use of assessor feedback forms, in the case of Edexcel courses, or informal feedback sessions between students and teachers. The College allows academic staff to decide on the nature and frequency of these informal sessions. However, the quality of assessment feedback is variable and, in respect of the Edexcel provision, the review team endorses the views expressed by the external examiner, who strongly recommends that the College ensures that students receive constructive feedback in a formal way at all stages of the assessment process. The College's internal verification system provides the opportunity for the second assessor to comment on the quality of feedback provided to students. However, this has not been carried out in practice and results in variable feedback, which does not support student achievement of their full potential.

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

2.11   The College's Staff Development Policy provides a useful framework to ensure that individual needs are planned and evaluated, and college-wide objectives are met. The policy affirms the College's expectation that staff are ultimately responsible for their own development, and that they also have a responsibility to contribute, as appropriate, to the development of others. Individual staff development is identified through the appraisal scheme and takes into account information from annual monitoring reports and observations from teaching. The College has effective processes for the support of new teaching staff within higher education courses through the appointment of a specific higher education mentor.

2.12   The College needs to fully embed its Staff Development Policy to support the teaching and learning strategy. Recent staff development activity has been limited, ranging from generic training workshops such as confidence-building sessions to professional updating of NCC examination requirements. The College will in future require academic staff to hold, or study for, an appropriate teaching qualification. It recognises that its staff development strategy needs to be further developed, in response to the views of the staff. The review team agrees that a high priority should be given to scholarly activity that is coordinated centrally and designed to meet the College's strategic priorities.

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 ensures appropriate provision of learning resources. It monitors the sufficiency and accessibility of learning resources before the start of each term through its Academic Committee, which is informed by excellent liaison with teaching staff and students. Teaching staff submit requests for learning resources to the management team, and within the budget allocated across the provision such requests are met. For example, when a tutor reported that a data projector was not available, the Principal investigated the reason for this and provided a replacement the following day. A similar decisive action was taken when students expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of teaching on one of their modules. These actions, together with other examples noted by the review team, demonstrate the way in which the College management reacts positively and promptly to staff and student feedback, which enhances students' access to the learning resources.

2.14   While the College makes effective use of feedback from students, its student survey would be enhanced if it had a more precise focus. Student feedback through surveys and the annual monitoring process provides the College with ongoing assurance that the learning resources are sufficient and accessible. However, the student survey fails to capture satisfaction levels on specific resources, such as the library, computer facilities and teaching accommodation. Students are generally satisfied with the equipment and availability of learning materials and the action taken in response to their feedback. For example, when concerns were raised about the adequacy of computing resources, the College opened two further computer laboratories.

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.

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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 welcoming and helpful information for prospective international students provides a clear insight into study within the UK. The College is responsible for the promotion of all its courses. Its website is usually the first source of reference for prospective students. The website engages prospective students through the provision of helpful information. There is a range of colourful course leaflets and information for the pre-entry stage. Some publications are those of the provider's awarding bodies, which contain additional contextual information. The International Prospectus provides essential information about visa and financial arrangements, along with an insight into life in the area. In response to a recommendation from the Accreditation Service for International Colleges (ASIC), information is now provided relating to living costs in the UK. The terms and conditions of enrolment are fully explained.

3.2   The College was commended by ASIC for its ethical approach towards the marketing and recruitment processes. The College requires its overseas agents to complete their British Council training and monitors their performance. Students confirmed that the College responds promptly to their enquiries.

3.3   The College is committed to using English to communicate with current and prospective students. The student submission states that this had resulted in some concerns among students, especially in relation to understanding the academic requirements of their courses. The College responded that this had been a problem with the first cohort of students but, following a revision of its admissions requirements in the light of new UK Border Agency regulations, this was now much less of an issue.The students confirmed this at their meeting with the team. Any residual problem was dealt with by additional lessons in English. Students confirmed that the pre-enrolment and induction information provided them with a good and realistic insight into study in the UK.

3.4   During the first visit the College was asked to review the contents of its student handbooks. At the time, it was unclear how the College ensured that students were made aware of detailed assessment criteria and higher level grading descriptors across a course. Furthermore, there was no clear overall assessment map to inform students of key dates and details of assessment throughout the year. At the second visit, staff explained that the relevant information is contained on the virtual learning environment. During the first visit, it was pointed out that certain additional sections were required for the college-wide student handbook, particularly regarding the late submission of coursework. By the time of the second visit, the missing sections had been inserted (but see also paragraph 3.6).

3.5   During the first visit, the College was asked to develop the virtual learning environment, which had very limited usage and few recent postings. At the second visit, staff were able to demonstrate that an ambitious programme to extend the range of functions available to students is being developed. Staff are being encouraged by the Vice-Principal to provide learning materials, session plans and schemes of work. They demonstrated that they are making progress in populating the site.

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

3.6   The College should review systematically all published information to ensure its accuracy, currency and appropriateness. Following the first visit, the College corrected

errors that had been drawn to its attention by the review team. However, it also introduced new mistakes, especially in its student handbook, by publishing policies and procedures that refer to academic and support structures which clearly do not operate within the College, while the information in the handbook is sometimes duplicated and sometimes contradictory. There are also spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors across the whole range of published documents. The College needs to appreciate that the thorough checking process necessary to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of information across all media requires a carefully considered approach. This requires careful cross-checking and proofreading and should involve the academic staff, who currently have little or no input.

3.7   The College needs to review its systems for managing published information to ensure their effectiveness. At the time of the first visit, the College did not have a working version control mechanism. There was confusion among staff about which was the most recent version of any given document, as a result of which the review team were issued with an out-of-date edition of the College prospectus. Following the first visit, the College produced a new version control document. This represents a positive move towards ensuring the accuracy and completeness of published information, but it requires effective and sustained implementation. The Principal holds ultimate editorial responsibility for both paper and web-based information. In practice, he is assisted by the Marketing Manager, the Registrar and the Vice-Principal, but the precise demarcation of responsibilities is not always clear. The College needs to ensure that the new version control process and associated flow chart for publishing information are followed consistently and that actions are clearly auditable. However, the College is making a good start in improving this aspect of its management of public information.

3.8   The website is the primary source of reference for applicants to the College, but at the time of the first visit some information on it had been incorrect for a period of several months. At the second visit, the College was able to demonstrate that errors had been identified and that, through an improved relationship with the web developer, corrections were being rapidly transmitted to the website. Indeed, when the review team identified some residual inaccuracies during the second visit, amendments were immediately made to the website.

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

Action plan[3]

Bradford College of Management action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight January 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 close and regular engagement between key staff in the College management team and tutors enables collective and consistent assurance of quality of provision (paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3)	Meetings between key staff, college and management and tutors to be held twice a semester Communicating of actions taken by management to staff and tutors by email, vocally or virtual learning environment.	6 June 2012	Registrar	Management and staff are aware of the quality of provisions within the College	Principal	Meeting minutes, staff emails and notices on virtual learning environment
• the close working relationship between students and staff engenders a positive and supportive environment focused on individual student needs, which adds value to their learning experience	Feedback forms on opinion of the College given once a semester to students and staff to gauge improvement for the college Further advertisement of new policies such	6 June 2012	Registrar	Positive feedback from students on feedback forms The popularity of the sessions and workshops	Principal	Student and staff feedback forms and evaluations Feedback session forms completed by students and teachers and workshop register and work

[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.

(paragraph 2.9)	as individual feedback sessions between teachers and students and workshops to help focus on individual student needs					produced in workshops
• the responsive and effective leadership provided by the College management team, including excellent liaison with the students and teaching staff, enhances students' access to the learning resources (paragraph 2.13)	Respond to all queries and questions by students and staff quickly and effectively by email, word of mouth, notices and virtual learning environment in order to enhance the access to learning resources	6 June 2012	Management, including the Principal, Board of Directors, Director of Studies, administrator, internal verifier and Student Support Officer	Lack of complaints from staff and students regarding management and its communication and liaising	Principal	Complaint forms completed by staff or students regarding management and its communication and liaising
• the welcoming and helpful information for prospective international students provides a clear insight into study within the UK (paragraph 3.1).	Check website every week to ensure information for international students in correct and up to date Ensure all prospective international students have access to updated prospectus	6 June 2012	Marketing Manager and Information Technology Technician	Student feedback shows positive response to questions regarding information given to them on studying in the UK before they came to the College as well as lack of complaints from international students	Principal	International student forms (especially from latest intake) and complaint forms

Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
				regarding this matter		
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:						
• ensure that its formal committees have appropriate powers and membership, and record and disseminate their decisions systematically (paragraph 1.3)	Review and revision of all policies relating to formal committees, including exam committee and complaints committee, update to show appropriate powers are being given to committees Review committee meeting minutes and decide how future minutes can more clearly show that decisions are being made systematically	6 June 2012	Board of Directors	Publishing of clearer policies, procedures and flowcharts regarding various committees in the College and the taking of minutes also explaining and distributing them to all committee members	Principal	Meeting minutes to show decisions are systematic Policies and flowcharts regarding formal committees to shows appropriate powers and membership
• refine the annual monitoring reports to monitor its course provision more effectively (paragraph 1.4)	Review and refine the annual monitoring report, in order to make it more relevant to the College and monitor course provision more effectively For instance make it more relevant with	6 June 2012	Board of Directors	Annual monitoring report is simpler to use and understand with more specific information relating to the College course provisions having been added	Principal	New annual monitoring reports

	information on student progressions and specific action plans					
• engage more formally and explicitly with relevant external reference points to ensure that full account is taken of recognised effective practice in the management of academic standards (paragraph 1.6)	Several steps need to be taken immediately including embedding all relevant external reference points, such as the Academic Infrastructure, into the internal procedures Also programme specifications need to be revised and reviewed to add information on subject benchmark statements, programme aims, intended learning outcomes and the means by which these outcomes are achieved and demonstrated The College must also map its activity against applicable sections of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and*	6 June 2012	Board of Directors/ Marketing Manager	A clearer, smoother running of courses within the College with students fully understanding the their program aims and staff applying the Academic Infrastructure in a more positive and comprehendible manner	Principal	Updated, proofread and published Academic Infrastructure and programme specifications with meeting minutes

	standards in higher education					
• ensure that internal verification is applied consistently across the provision (paragraph 1.7)	This process has already begun with the creation of the role of the internal verifier in the College and how the internal verifier works within the Edexcel courses and with the Edexcel students and staff being explained and outlined to all staff and students The internal verifier and Director of Studies are also working to ensure that these new polices relating to internal verifier and Edexcel are being applied consistantly Meetings with Edexcel teaching staff have also been held to help outline information on criteria for merit and distinction and how to mark appropriately	6 June 2012	Internal verifier and Director of Studies	All teachers and students understand the role of internal verification within the Edexcel course and follow the correct process of applying it	Principal	Report from Edexcel review in May 2012 Results of Edexcel course for 2012 Meeting minutes for Examination committee and with Edexcel teachers

standardise the assessment feedback and internal verification procedures to ensure consistency of practice and provide an effective development tool to encourage students to achieve their full potential (paragraph 2.10)	This process has already begun with standardisation of assessment feedback in a number of ways including booking forms being arranged with heads of department for students to have individual assessment feedback with their Head of Department Feedback with students is also checked by the Principal with the teachers, to ensure students are getting enough time with tutors to help them achieve their potential and that assessment feedback is constructive and informative	6 June	Heads of Department	More assessment feedback sessions with heads of department, with completed feedback forms giving positive and constructive information to students	Principal	Booking forms, completed feedback forms of assessment feedback with students Written feedback on students work
consider a centrally coordinated process for enhancing staff development activities to ensure that	Enhancement of the higher education culture via additional activities, training events, staff development programmes, writing groups and	6 July 2012	Principal	Scholarly activities are linked to the curriculum and staff feel supported to undertake these	Board of Directors	Events evaluated and links between staff development and scholarly activities established

scholarly activity has a high priority (paragraph 2.12)	seminars, and so on					
• review systematically its published information to ensure its accuracy, currency and appropriateness (paragraph 3.6)	These changes have begun already with the College reviewing all published information to ensure its accuracy, currency and appropriateness A new thorough checking process has also been brought into the College to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of information across all media Careful and constructive cross-checking and proofreading as well as involvement of academic staff	6 June 2012	Marketing Manger working with Principal	Successful implementation of publishing policy with thorough cross-checking, proofreading and involvement of academic staff before going to print	Board of Directors	New publishing procedure, with involvement of staff, cross-checking and proofreading Newly published media materials such as handbooks and policies
• review its systems for managing its published information to ensure their effectiveness (paragraph 3.7).	Review, revise and effectively implement the College systems for managing published information With information being given outlining	6 June 2012	Marketing Manager with Principal	A new publishing policy and flow chart being effectively implemented with no/limited mistakes in published	Board of Directors	New publishing procedure and flow chart Newly published media materials such as handbooks and

	which member of staff is responsible for each stage or each media output A flow chart also outlining the above information The process for checking that all staff understand and follow these new policies must also be more thoroughly checked more often by the Principal			materials		policies Meeting minutes
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:						
• fully implement its specified policies and procedures (paragraph 1.2)	Review and revise all policies and procedures to check they are up to date and are being implemented effectively	16 June 2012	Principal	Publishing of new policies and procedures With changes explained to staff and student involved in the policies by meetings with minutes or printed emails	Board of Directors	New policies and procedures

• formalise the existing process for the observation of teaching (paragraph 2.6)	Review of process of teaching observation to formalise the process	16 June 2012	Director of Studies	A more formal process for teaching observation made and published, with explanation to all teaching staff in minutes With inclusions in the staff handbook along with staff development policy	Principal	Policy and procedure for teaching observation Feedback forms from teaching observations Staff handbook
• revise the student feedback questionnaire to ensure that student satisfaction levels can be measured for specific learning resources such as the library, computer facilities and teaching accommodation (paragraph 2.14)	Review and revise the student feedback questionnaire to ensure students' satisfaction levels can be measured for specific learning resources	16 June 2012	Principal	New published student survey forms with a more precise focus, such as capturing the satisfaction levels on specific resources	Board of Directors	Completed new student survey forms
• further develop a strategy for the virtual learning environment to ensure that a wide range of learning	Meetings with teachers regarding uploading work onto virtual learning environment, as well as continuous	16 June	Principal	More correct work being correctly uploaded onto the virtual learning environment and being more	Board of Directors	New virtual learning environment Meeting minutes regarding new

resources is consistently made available to students (paragraph 3.5).	observation of what work is being uploaded and feedback with teachers

Written policy and procedure for uploading work onto virtual learning environment | | | thoroughly checked by the Principal | | virtual learning environment

Policy on updating information on virtual learning environment |

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.