



# **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

**Summative review**

**Totton College**

**May 2012**

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## Preface

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education. As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

## Purpose of IQER

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

## The IQER process

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

## Developmental engagement

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college
- an optional written submission by the student body
- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit
- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days
- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education
- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

## Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams, however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

## Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents
- reviewing the optional written submission from students
- asking questions of relevant staff
- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ), which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*)
- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects
- guidelines for preparing programme specifications, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study
- award benchmark statements which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

## Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential**, **advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.
- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence**, **limited confidence** or **no confidence**. There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published. Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's

management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body/ies as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

## Executive summary

### The Summative review of Totton College carried out in May 2012

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

### Good practice

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

- effective staff training on the teacher education distance-learning programme incorporates staff induction and individual training for marking, assessment, teaching observation, feedback and peer mentoring.

### Recommendations

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

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

- develop and implement a formal overarching structure for the management, delivery and reporting of all higher education provision
- engage more formally and explicitly with the Academic Infrastructure and its successor, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, to ensure that current and future higher education provision meets the expectations of good practice contained in these documents
- ensure that all student handbooks are aligned to the Academic Infrastructure and, in future, to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

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

- initiate a distinctive higher education staff development strategy, including institutional support for scholarly and professional activity
- review the structure and content of HNC/D programme review and development plans to promote more focused and timely enhancement of learning
- enhance the liaison between academic staff and the central marketing team to strengthen the procedures for checking the accuracy and completeness of public information.

## A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Totton College (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of Edexcel and the University of Greenwich (the University). The review was carried out by Professor Paul Brunt, Mrs Jane Durant (reviewers), and Dr Richard Wheeler (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College and awarding bodies, a meeting with students at the preparatory meeting, reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in Section C of this report. The review was conducted by a desk-based study. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice*, subject and award benchmark statements, the FHEQ and programme specifications.

3 In order to help HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree awards, Section D of this report includes a statement that there are no Foundation Degree programmes currently delivered at the College.

4 Totton College was established in 1969 as a medium-sized sixth-form college located on the edge of the New Forest, serving the industrial centres of the Solent and Fawley, but also drawing students from the Romsey and Salisbury areas. The College's mission statement is encapsulated in the phrase 'Leading Learning; Sharing Success', incorporating strategic objectives and measures called 'Futures 15'. Higher education provision is a small but important part of the College's portfolio.

5 The College has approximately 1,400 full-time students, 900 part-time students and 350 apprentices. Most full-time students are aged 16-18. Currently, higher education accounts for five full-time and 14 part-time students, representing about eight full-time equivalents. Two full-time staff and three part-time staff contribute to higher education teaching, which is managed across two faculties, alongside the 16-19 years provision. Formal management responsibility for higher education programmes is incorporated within the wider responsibilities of the Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality). However, at the time of the review, a new Principal had recently been appointed and a major restructure of the senior team, curriculum management and business support was in progress, a process to be completed by July 2012.

6 The higher education programmes that come within the scope of the review are listed below, with their awarding bodies and student full-time equivalent numbers by programme.

### Edexcel

- HND Graphic Design (top-up) (5)

### **University of Greenwich**

- Post-Compulsory Education and Training (PCE/PGCE) (Distance Learning) (3.08)

### **Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies**

7 The HND Graphic Design (top-up) programme operates within the standard arrangements for Higher National Certificates and Diplomas approved directly by Edexcel. The distance-learning provision, delivered by the College on behalf of the University of Greenwich, is based on a partnership agreement between the University and its network centres across the country. The University accepts formal responsibility for the approval and review of programmes. The mechanisms for quality assurance are those of the University, although it is acknowledged that as far as possible network centre procedures for quality assurance are utilised. Responsibility for day-to-day delivery of the programmes is delegated to staff at the network centre. Annual programme monitoring reports are prepared and scrutinised according to prevailing University requirements. The University's School of Education appoints a link tutor to liaise with the network centre programme leader over day-to-day coordination of the programme. The network centre undertakes to provide appropriate facilities and support mechanisms, including a virtual learning environment and a network manager, link tutor and course coordinator. The network centre is responsible for advertising and recruiting to the programme, subject to the University's oversight.

### **Recent developments in higher education at the College**

8 The College's higher education provision has diminished over the last year, owing to a decline in recruitment to the Edexcel HNC Graphic Design and to the Post-Compulsory Education and Training programme with Southampton University, both of which did not recruit in September 2011. However, the College has plans to develop its higher education provision, particularly through Foundation Degrees, including some online delivery of programmes. A Higher Education 2012-15 policy document includes a commitment to establish a Higher Education Steering Group to take this process forward. However, at present, this is limited to a declaration of intent. Since the appointment of a new Principal in September 2011, the College has been preoccupied with responding to a critical report from Ofsted, which relates to the overwhelming bulk of its provision. The consequent restructuring of the College management, to be in place by July 2012, is designed to respond to the Ofsted report, but includes the expectation of a new appointment of a Head of Higher Education provision. At the time of the review, no such post existed and the review was undertaken in the context of the existing management structure.

### **Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission**

9 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the team. No student written submission was provided. However, at the preparatory meeting, the coordinator met a group of students from across the provision. Their responses to reviewers' questions made a positive contribution to the evidence base for the review.



## **B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education**

### **Core theme 1: Academic standards**

#### **How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

10 The management and delivery of the HND (top-up) operates in the context of various Edexcel guidance papers and regulations, including the appointment of the external moderator who liaises with the tutor responsible for the programme. The head of the media and performing arts department, in which the HND is located, is responsible for the management of the programme and is the College nominee for liaison with Edexcel. For the teacher education programme, the College operates as a network centre for the distance-learning provision. A College tutor in the department of humanities is the manager and coordinator of the programme. The tutor reports internally to the head of department and liaises closely with the University link tutor. Students are bound by the awarding body's regulations and the College meets its delegated obligations, which are laid out in the partnership agreement with the University. The University ratifies all academic aspects of the provision at validation, approves the qualifications of College staff who teach on programme, and appoints the external examiner.

11 The University's network centre for Post-Compulsory Education and Training is responsible for the quality assurance procedures and monitoring requirements of the distance-learning teacher education programme. It provides helpful guidance, which clarifies the arrangements between the University and college partners. The University works closely with the College to ensure that the partnership is managed effectively. It provides the College with clear and appropriate guidance on running, monitoring and enhancing the provision, and there is effective liaison between the University link tutor and College staff.

12 Senior management responsibility for the higher education provision as a whole resides, under the current arrangements, with the Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality), working with the two relevant heads of department in which the programmes are located. Each programme has a lead tutor who liaises with the awarding bodies, oversees student progress, and reports through the College's internal quality assurance process via their head of department at fortnightly departmental meetings. Heads of department have a monthly meeting with the Assistant Principal, who in turn reports on a weekly basis to the College's Executive Group. There is at present no separate grouping for higher education that has a developmental remit, that discusses and monitors quality and is able to report on sharing good practice between higher education programmes, or that includes student representation.

13 The Developmental engagement report included an advisable recommendation to formalise assessment procedures on the HNC Graphic Design, which in the event did not recruit in September 2011. The HND (top-up) which followed it still has no formally constituted assessment panel or examination board, although plans for its provision at the end of the present academic year are noted. The annual meeting with the external verifier has, in practice, determined the progression and award of students on the programme. The College has recently produced a number of guidance documents for the higher national programme, outlining procedures for the management of admissions and assessment. Topics covered include assessment boards, the return of marked work, and plagiarism. At the time of the review, these had not been formally approved nor fully developed within

the College. They had not yet been finally checked for alignment with the *Code of practice* and they had not been shared with students prior to the start of the programme.

14 The College uses the same formal management, delivery and reporting arrangements for its higher education provision as for its further education programmes. This system is used exclusively in the case of the higher national provision. Additionally, in the case of the distance learning, for the Post-Compulsory Education and Training programme, the University applies its own well developed and rigorous procedures and staff meet the University's requirements in every respect. In the context of the College's draft higher education strategy document, a formal structure is required, which clearly articulates how responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards are delegated within a management and committee structure, including a set of policies and procedures relating to student assessment. The team considers that it would be advisable for the College to develop and implement a formal overarching structure for the management, delivery and reporting of all higher education provision.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

15 The team found little evidence of active engagement with the Academic Infrastructure in the College's self-evaluation. While due account of the Academic Infrastructure is evident in the provision managed by the University, students on the higher national programme, for example, do not receive a handbook that includes a programme specification, reference to subject benchmark statements, information on intended learning outcomes or assessment regulations. The College recognises the need to increase staff awareness of the Academic Infrastructure and to provide development for staff on their understanding and engagement with this framework. A staff guide of good practice in higher education is currently being developed. College representatives acknowledge that it would be beneficial for its processes and procedures to refer more explicitly to elements of the Academic Infrastructure and for its deliberative structures to be more formally aligned. The team considers that it would be advisable for the College to engage more formally and explicitly with the Academic Infrastructure and with its successor, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, to ensure that current and future higher education provision meets the expectations of good practice contained in these documents.

### **How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?**

16 College representatives are involved in aspects of programme design, monitoring and review, assessment, responding to external examiners/verifiers' reports, managing the College's relationship with its awarding bodies, and in responding to student feedback. The College's further education quality assurance structure provides a system for monitoring student progress and achievement, and this is used on the higher national programme. A productive relationship exists with the University, which has responsibilities in this area.

17 The College gathers students' views about its provision at the end of each module by questionnaires and informal discussion. This informs an internal annual reporting mechanism from the department to the College executive for discussion, and which is included in a college-wide self-assessment report and action plan.

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

18 The College has provided limited professional development opportunities for higher education teaching staff in the past year. Records of staff development to support the teacher education programme indicate some involvement of staff with generic issues, for example safeguarding, and equality and diversity. In addition, the programme leader attends regular meetings of the University of Greenwich Network conference. However, the College does not yet have a policy to identify and deliver staff development specific to teaching, learning and assessment in higher education. The team considers that it is desirable for the College to initiate a distinctive higher education staff development strategy, including institutional support for scholarly and professional activity.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities as set out in its partnership agreements, for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.**

## **Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities**

### **How are responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities for higher education programmes delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?**

19 Responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities are the same as those for the maintenance of academic standards (paragraphs 10-12), within the existing framework for the management of further education provision. The HNC/D programme is subject to quality assurance in the same way as other Edexcel provision within the framework of the College's self-assessment cycle at programme, departmental and College level.

20 For the distance-learning teacher education provision, the programme leader liaises effectively with the University. Regular tutor meetings are held between colleagues from the College and the University. Detailed agendas and minutes confirm a range of activities, including reporting on student achievements, improvement actions, student feedback, and tutor and programme developments. Minutes of these meetings are shared with the head of department and Assistant Principal.

21 A calendar of meetings, published annually as part of the College's quality assurance cycle, provides a framework for reporting on the provision at programme, departmental and College level. Programme leaders and teams attend fortnightly department meetings. Heads of departments report to and meet with the Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality) once a month, who in turn reports to the College executive group on a weekly basis.

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

22 As indicated in paragraphs 19 to 21, the College relies on programme leaders and heads of department to ensure that obligations to the awarding bodies are fulfilled. In particular, the College relies on external moderators or examiners' reports, student feedback and student outcomes in making judgements which feed into the self-assessment

process. The external moderator for the higher national programmes confirms that the College meets the requirements of Edexcel and comments on positive practice within the provision, for example assignment briefs which are current, topical and relate to commerce and industry. The Head of the Media Department is the College nominee for links with Edexcel. The external examiner for the teacher education provision provides an annual report based on a visit to the College. The programme leader provides a comprehensive programme monitoring report, including a critical overview of the programme, which is sent to the University and discussed internally within the College.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

23 As indicated in paragraph 15, the Academic Infrastructure is embedded within the University's distance-learning teacher education provision, but there is little evidence of staff awareness of its implications on the higher nationals. The HND student handbook makes reference to the qualification level in accordance with the FHEQ, but there is no evidence that students receive a programme specification or information on benchmark statements, intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning strategies, and assessment regulations. The team considers that the student handbook is lacking in detail, content and alignment with the Academic Infrastructure. The team considers that it would be advisable for the College to ensure that all student handbooks are aligned to the Academic Infrastructure and, in future, to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

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

24 The Director of Teaching and Learning has overall responsibility for assuring and developing the quality of teaching and learning in the College. The Director monitors standards of teaching and learning, reporting to the Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality), the College Executive and governors. The College has recently introduced a staff observation scheme, which incorporates formal graded observations aligned to the Common Inspection Framework and, additionally, includes peer observation. Teachers are observed annually by a trained observer as part of a graded cross-college observation process designed to focus on student learning. Outcomes from observations trigger additional support and further observation, if required. The focus of peer observations is the monitoring of improvement against teachers' individual improvement plans. Observation reports are moderated and reviewed for quality.

25 Outcomes from this year's HND graded observation support the view of the external moderator that standards of teaching and learning are good. As yet, no peer observations have been undertaken on this programme. Students express satisfaction with the standard of teaching on the HND. Teacher education students comment positively on the quality of tutorial teaching and course evaluation returns confirm this view.

26 The College places considerable reliance on the use of external examiners' reports to assure itself of the quality of teaching and learning. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Quality) reads them prior to dissemination to heads of department, who are responsible for any required follow-up actions. Contents of external examiners' reports feed into the programme review and self-assessment process, together with student feedback, observations of teaching and learning, and any external annual monitoring reports. Each programme works to a development plan. Developments for the teacher education programme are monitored and shared with the University; actions on these demonstrate that teams are proactive with evidence of good progress. The plans for the HNC are brief and comprise bulleted summary notes. The review team considers these to be insufficiently detailed and focused to drive improvements. Monitoring of progress against all

programme development plans within the College occurs mid-year by heads of department. The team considers that it is desirable for the College to review the structure and content of HNC/D programme review and development plans to promote focused and timely enhancement of learning.

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

27 Following initial diagnostic testing at the start of their programme, students are offered a range of additional learning and study support facilities from the central support service department. During induction, students are made aware of other services available to them. These include, for example, counselling, welfare support, and a general information service.

28 The College publishes details of the responsibilities of personal tutors and advisers, and of students' entitlement to tutorials. Students on the HNC Graphic Design receive a very brief reference to this entitlement in their course handbook. Further guidance is available within the draft Higher Education Good Practice Guide. Tutors are expected to maintain records of tutorials which are monitored by the Assistant Principal (Learner Journey and Community Engagement).

29 Tutorial guidance for HND students is ongoing and informal within the teaching timetable. Within this small class, student representatives confirmed that they receive an annual individual discussion on their academic progress and ongoing support in class. Tutorial guidance for teacher education students is an integral part of the distance-learning process through email, telephone, written feedback, and face-to-face meetings. Students confirmed that they appreciate the high level of support they receive.

30 The HND students complete the College online survey and module evaluations. Because of the small group size, students receive informal feedback with the tutor on a regular basis. The module evaluations, which Post-Compulsory Education and Training students complete, meet the University's requirements. Feedback from students is managed by department heads and contributes to the self-assessment process.

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

31 As part of the implementation of the revised teaching and learning observation scheme, the College undertakes staff development in lesson observations with all teachers. The specific staff development needs of the HND Graphic Design programme leader are being partially addressed through online access to new software packages which are relevant to both the delivery and assessment of the programme. The external examiner reports on the involvement of the teacher education teaching team in a variety of effective initiatives and recommends that they should be shared with the University and the network cluster. These refer to local training for new teacher educators, including induction and individual training for marking, assessment, feedback, teaching observation and peer mentoring. The team concurs with the external examiner that these initiatives constitute good practice.

### **How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?**

32 The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) allocates discretionary funding to heads of department for the provision of resources to support the two higher education

programmes. Following the Developmental engagement, the College responded positively to the recommendation to provide additional software for use on the HNC/HND programme. Students on this programme expressed satisfaction with the College library and studio facilities.

33 In addition to accessing the University virtual learning environment, teacher education students also access the College virtual learning environment. This is under development to provide additional materials, such as hyperlinks and book reviews. It is maintained independently of the University's site. Students expressed satisfaction with access to the University's online resources. They have access to online and hard copy texts through the Learning Resource Centre, which is open on two evenings a week and during vacations. Students confirmed that resources are good. The mid-year critical appraisal and programme review of the teacher education programme includes a consideration of the sufficiency of resources.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities as required by the awarding bodies to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

### **Core theme 3: Public information**

#### **What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?**

34 The College is responsible for disseminating general information about the higher education programmes for marketing purposes. It publishes an adult, professional and higher education brochure and online information on the College website. The brochure relates briefly to programme dates, times, and venue, and refers applicants to the main College services for further details. The website provides further information on content, entrance requirements and progression opportunities. The College is currently negotiating with external companies to redesign its website to improve the accessibility of information and to promote the higher education programmes. As a result of the Developmental engagement recommendation, the search facility on the website has been improved.

35 For the teacher education programme, the College is responsible for producing a student handbook using the template provided by the University. In accordance with the partnership agreement, the College is able to customise this template. Both programme teams upload resources and teaching materials to the College virtual learning environment.

36 The HND programme leader manages a bespoke programme website. The site provides attractive graphics and details of student case studies. Although it is used primarily as a teaching tool, it contains links to the College website and to other hyperlinks. Discussions within the College are ongoing as to the relationship of this site to the main College website. Although originally written for the HNC programme, the student handbook has been amended for the current Diploma group. As indicated in paragraph 23, the current student handbook is not sufficiently developed and omits important information.

**What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing?  
How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?**

37 In accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement with the University, the College is responsible for checking the accuracy of published information relating to the teacher education programme, and for seeking agreement for the use of the University's logo or name in any information prior to publication. The College is required to make copies of information available to the University. Currently, the College relies on the programme leader to act as the main link between the institutions on public information.

38 The accuracy and completeness of the information contained in the adult, professional and higher education brochure is checked and approved by heads of department prior to submission to the Marketing Department. The latter provides a proofreading service and is responsible for the production of hard and electronic copies. However, the team found some variation in the completeness of information between programmes, for example in making clear the precise level, within the FHEQ, of the higher education programmes. The Marketing Department recognises the need to update and review its procedures to ensure they are known and used effectively. The team considers that it would be desirable for the College to enhance the liaison between academic staff and the central marketing team to strengthen the procedures for checking the accuracy and completeness of public information.

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

## **C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment**

39 The Developmental engagement took place in June 2011. The three lines of enquiry were as follows.

**Line of enquiry 1:** How does the College ensure that staff engaged in higher education provision are sufficiently skilled and knowledgeable to provide effective assessment for students?

**Line of enquiry 2:** Is feedback sufficiently detailed and constructive to enable students to understand and improve their performance?

**Line of enquiry 3:** How effectively does the College operate with its partners to ensure that published material on assessment is accurate and accessible?

40 The Developmental engagement team identified a number of areas of good practice, in particular the College's close working relationship with the University of Greenwich, and with the University of Southampton (see paragraph 8), for the teacher education programmes in 2011. The team noted examples of innovative assessment strategies on the HNC Graphic Design programme, which is closely linked to industry needs and College and community life. The feedback to students on teacher education programmes is thorough and analytical, links theory to practice and complements tutorial support, linked to assessment and feedback on student progress.

41 The Developmental engagement team also made a number of recommendations. It considered that it would be advisable for the College to pay careful attention to the requirements of the Academic Infrastructure, including the formalisation of assessment procedures on the HNC Graphic Design. It would be advisable for the College to consolidate information on assessment with that for teaching and learning into an effective HNC student handbook, to ensure that all students receive an accurate and accessible written record of academic requirements, which is also accessible to staff and external stakeholders. It would be desirable for the College to make more explicit reference to intended learning outcomes in both assignment briefs and written feedback on the HNC Graphic Design and for both staff and students to benefit from use of the latest software packages. It would also be desirable for the College to engage in further staff development in the use of the virtual learning environment, to review the search facility for the HNC programme on the website and ensure that the site is user-friendly for all prospective higher education students. The College still has work to do to achieve the full implementation of these advisable and desirable recommendations.

## D Foundation Degrees

42 At present, the College does not offer Foundation Degrees, but it intends to submit proposals for new programmes when opportunities occur.

## E Conclusions and summary of judgements

43 The team has identified a number of features of good practice in the College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, Edexcel and the University of Greenwich.

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

- effective staff training on the teacher education distance-learning programme incorporates staff induction and individual training for marking, assessment, teaching observation, feedback and peer mentoring (paragraph 31).

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

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

- develop and implement a formal overarching structure for the management, delivery and reporting of all higher education provision (paragraph 14)
- engage more formally and explicitly with the Academic Infrastructure and its successor, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, to ensure that current and future higher education provision meets the expectations of good practice contained in these documents (paragraph 15)
- ensure that all student handbooks are aligned to the Academic Infrastructure and, in future, to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraphs 23 and 36).



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

- initiate a distinctive higher education staff development strategy, including institutional support for scholarly and professional activity (paragraph 18)
- review the structure and content of HNC/D programme review and development plans to promote more focused and timely enhancement of learning (paragraph 26)
- enhance the liaison between academic staff and the central marketing team to strengthen the procedures for checking the accuracy and completeness of public information (paragraph 38).

48 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

49 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

50 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

| Totton College action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2012  |   |               |                          |   |                |  |
|--|---|---------------|--------------------------|---|----------------|--|
| Good practice  | Action to be taken  | Target date   | Action by                | Success indicators  | Reported to    | Evaluation   |
| In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:   |   |               |                          |   |                |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective staff training on the teacher education distance-learning programme incorporates staff induction and individual training for marking, assessment, teaching observation, feedback and peer mentoring (paragraph 31)</li> </ul> | Establish forum for teachers in higher education<br><br>Remit: disseminate good practice<br><br>Ensure Academic Infrastructure (and the Quality Code) requirements are appropriately embedded in curriculum | December 2012 | Higher Education Manager | Minutes of Higher Education Forum give evidence of sharing good practice on marking, assessment, observation and feedback to students<br><br>Good practice is embedded into all course materials, including student handbooks and schemes of work<br><br>Positive data from student evaluations | Vice Principal | Annual monitoring report<br><br>Self-assessment report<br><br>Minutes of Higher Education Forum<br><br>Student evaluations |

| Advisable  | Action to be taken   | Target date  | Action by   | Success indicators  | Reported to  | Evaluation                    |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|-------------------------------|
| The team considers that it is <b>advisable</b> for the College to:   |  |  |   |   |  |                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and implement a formal overarching structure for the management, delivery and reporting of all higher education provision (paragraph 14)</li> </ul> | <p>Appoint Higher Education Manager</p> <p>Establish Higher Education Steering Group to formalise strategy and plans for higher education expansion as identified by the Principal</p> | <p>August 2012</p> <p>December 2012</p> <p>January 2013</p> <p>December 2012</p> | <p>Vice Principal</p> <p>Higher Education Manager</p> <p>Higher Education Manager</p> <p>Higher Education Manager</p> | <p>Appointment of Higher Education Manager</p> <p>Documentary evidence of the establishment of Higher Education Steering Group with agreed plans for the expansion of higher education signed off by Senior Management Team</p> <p>Establishment of staff development processes for teachers involved in higher education delivery</p> <p>Further development of quality assurance systems inclusive of evaluation of</p> | <p>Principal</p> <p>Vice Principal</p> <p>Vice Principal</p> <p>Vice Principal</p> | <p>Self-assessment report</p> |

|  |  |                |                          |   |                |   |
|--|--|----------------|--------------------------|---|----------------|---|
|  |  | March 2013     | Higher Education Manager | <p>student data on attendance, retention and attainment as well as applications and enrolments</p> <p>Documentary evidence of liaison with higher education providers to establish, launch and administer new higher education programmes</p> | Vice Principal |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage more formally and explicitly with the Academic Infrastructure and its successor, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, to ensure that current and future higher education provision meets the expectations of good practice contained in these documents (paragraph 15)</li> </ul> | <p>To complete and formally ratify Higher Education Good Practice Guide and disseminate to higher education course providers accordingly</p> <p>Key elements to be embedded into all higher education programmes</p> | September 2012 | Higher Education Manager | <p>Higher Education Good Practice Guide maps protocols for delivery of higher education against Academic Infrastructure</p> <p>This is embedded in the content of student handbooks and assessment material</p>                               | Vice Principal | <p>External moderators' reports</p> <p>Self-assessment report</p> |

|   |   |   |  |  |   |   |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that all student handbooks are aligned to the Academic Infrastructure and, in future, to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraphs 23 and 36)</li> </ul> | <p>Identify key material to be included in course handbooks related to student assessment and academic requirements</p> <p>Formulate new student handbooks for HNC/HND</p>  | <p>September 2012</p> <p>September 2012</p> | <p>Course Coordinator</p> <p>Head of Faculty</p>   | <p>Accurate and detailed student handbooks which make explicit references to assessment procedures, course specifications, learning outcomes and benchmark statements</p>  | <p>Higher Education Manager</p>             | <p>Student evaluation/ feedback</p> <p>External moderators' reports</p> |
| <b>Desirable</b>  | <b>Action to be taken</b>   | <b>Target date</b>                          | <b>Action by</b>   | <b>Success indicators</b>  | <b>Reported to</b>                          | <b>Evaluation</b>   |
| The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the College to:  |   |   |  |  |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initiate a distinctive higher education staff development strategy, including institutional support for scholarly and professional activity (paragraph 18)</li> </ul>      | <p>Establish links with other colleges with proven track record of managing higher education</p> <p>Higher Education Steering Group to develop specific training strategy and plan for all teachers of higher education</p> | <p>December 2012</p> <p>March 2013</p>      | <p>Higher Education Manager</p> <p>Higher Education Manager/Director for Teaching and Learning</p> | <p>Evidenced through meetings, visits, as part of peer reviews</p> <p>Audit of Training and Development needs identified for all teachers of higher education</p> <p>Records of training undertaken in conjunction with higher education partners, including</p> | <p>Vice Principal</p> <p>Vice Principal</p> | <p>Staff appraisals</p> <p>Training records</p>                         |

|   |   |                |  |  |   |  |
|---|---|----------------|--|--|---|--|
|   |   |                |  | the University of Greenwich  |   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the structure and content of HNC/D programme review and development plans to promote more focused and timely enhancement of learning (paragraph 26)</li> </ul>                              | <p>Conduct detailed review of the HNC/HND programmes</p> <p>Identify areas for improvement in its structure and content</p>                                     | September 2012 | <p>Head of Faculty</p> <p>Course Coordinator</p> <p>Higher Education Manager</p>                 | <p>Documentary evidence of comprehensive review of HNC/HND accompanied by specific action plan</p>   | Vice Principal  | Self-assessment report   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhance the liaison between academic staff and the central marketing team to strengthen the procedures for checking the accuracy and completeness of public information (paragraph 38).</li> </ul> | <p>Nominate marketing representative to be permanent member of Higher Education Steering Group</p> <p>Ensure proofreading and sign off prior to publication</p> | December 2012  | <p>Higher Education Manager/<br/>Assistant Principal College Services</p> <p>Head of Faculty</p> | <p>Accurate and reliable information on all higher education programmes evident in public information, including the public website and College Prospectus</p> | <p>Vice Principal</p> <p>Higher Education Manager</p> | <p>Self-assessment report</p> <p>Student survey gives evidence of support for accuracy and reliable information and ease of access</p> |

**RG 987 08/12**

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