Zaskin College

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

May 2012

Key findings about Zaskin College

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in May 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives, the Institute of Administrative Management, London Centre of Marketing, and the Confederation of Tourism & Hospitality.

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

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

Good practice

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

- the oversight of the Accreditation Officer which ensures consistent and effective compliance with awarding organisations' requirements (paragraph 1.3)
- the use of the well targeted and specific support for students' preparation for summative assessment (paragraph 2.4)
- the use of the pre-arrival guide which prepares students well for life and study in 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:

- review and implement appropriate changes to the form and content of its programme specifications to ensure accuracy, completeness and effectiveness for all stakeholders (paragraph 3.7).

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

- review its separate policies to develop a comprehensive quality assurance framework that provides a central reference source for academic staff (paragraph 1.4)
- develop a single annual review and action plan process to better support the wider oversight of academic standards and quality assurance of the provision (paragraph 1.10).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Zaskin College (the provider; the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the Association of Business Executives (ABE), the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM), the London Centre for Marketing (LCM), the Confederation of Tourism & Hospitality (CTH), and the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA). The review was carried out by Mr Gary Hargreaves, Mr John Holloway and Ms Frances Wiles (reviewers) and Mr Maldwyn Buckland (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the *[Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)*.[2] Evidence in support of the review included: documentation supplied by the provider and its awarding organisations and the British Accreditation Council. Evidence was also gathered from meetings with staff and students and the scrutiny of samples of student work.

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

- Academic Infrastructure
- the Association of Business Executives regulations
- the Institute of Administrative Management regulations
- the London Centre of Marketing regulations
- the Confederation of Tourism & Hospitality regulations
- the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants regulations.

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

In March 2002, Zaskin College (the College) became a private limited company with the aim of offering a wide range of courses, including Information Technology and Tourism, Business and Finance, to local and international students. Since then, it has established itself as a local provider of education in a wide range of courses from level 4 to level 7. In September 2009, the College moved to its current premises in Townsend House, Harrow. All courses offered by the College are full-time. There are currently 190 students enrolled, aged between 18 and 39. Students originate from various parts of the world, including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Niger, the Philippines, Nigeria, Zambia, Cyprus, Nepal, and Poland.

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

Association of Business Executives
- Diploma in Business Management (20 FTEs)
- Diploma in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality (27 FTEs)
- PG Diploma in Business Management (8 FTEs)

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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.

Institute of Administrative Management (IAM)
- Diploma in Business and Administrative Management (16 FTEs)

London Centre of Marketing (LCM)
- PG Diploma in Business Management and Marketing (10)

Confederation of Tourism & Hospitality (CTH)
- PG Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management (18 FTEs)

Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA)
- ACCA Professional (41 FTEs)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College delivers programmes at Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) levels 4-7, in accordance with the requirements of its awarding organisations, which have overall responsibility for the management of academic standards. The awarding organisations are: the Association of Business Executives (ABE), the Institute of Administrative Management (IAM), the London Centre for Marketing (LCM), and the Confederation of Tourism & Hospitality (CTH).

In addition, the College has applied for the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA) Gold Membership and delivers the ACCA Professional course at QCF level 7 (for continuing students only).

For the Association of Business Executives (ABE) programmes, programme specifications, intended learning outcomes, first and second marking, moderation, and strategic curriculum development is the responsibility of the awarding organisation. The College is responsible for issuing formative feedback to students on their assignments, student recruitment and selection, retention and completion, staff development, student tutorials and the monitoring of the quality of higher education teaching and learning. There is shared responsibility for programme and module information given to students and procedures for the publication of public information.

For the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH) programmes, the College is responsible for the first marking of student assignments and giving feedback to students. Moderation or second marking is the responsibility of the awarding organisation, along with the development of programme specifications, intended learning outcomes and strategic and curriculum development. There is shared responsibility for the setting of assignments, reviewing and responding to annual monitoring reviews and module evaluation, staff development, admissions guidance, quality assurance, student appeals, resources and public information.

The Institute of Administrative Managers (IAM) programmes are first marked jointly with second marking/moderation being the responsibility of the awarding organisation. Responsibility is also shared for the issuing of student feedback, quality assurance, guidance for progression, student appeals, programme and module information and public information. The College is responsible for strategic and curriculum development, recruitment, retention and completion, annual monitoring, staff development, admissions tutorials and learning resources.

The London Centre of Marketing (LCM) has responsibility for the first and second marking of student work, programme specifications and intended leaning outcomes. The College is responsible for giving student feedback, recruitment, retention and completion, annual

monitoring, staff development, admissions, tutorials and learning resources. There is a shared responsibility for setting assignments, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, progression, student appeals and public information.

Recent developments

The College is pursuing a rolling programme of refurbishment, encompassing all teaching and learning rooms. Since the acquisition of the new premises, new classrooms and meeting rooms have been added, which are fully equipped with up-to-date multimedia facilities. As stated in the British Accreditation Council (BAC) review 2010, the 'rooms are well appointed and appropriately furnished, and well equipped to the highest standard'. Soundproofing has been installed throughout the campus in order to create a study-friendly environment. New disabled bays in the car park were recently created in support of the College's disability policy.

Further improvements have been made to the robustness of management systems. These include electronic information-sharing between the College and the UK Border Agency. The College has also recently introduced new policies for information security and a green travel plan.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. In order to do so, the Students' Union representatives used a combination of mechanisms to gather student views. These included: a student core-group meeting, Student Satisfaction Survey using an online survey tool, a video-recorded focus group meeting where students discussed academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information provided to students and wider stakeholders. The focus group conducted four meetings to draft the quantitative data into a student submission before the final taking stock of student views.

Further review meetings were arranged by the Students' Union for students. Several preparatory meetings were held between students, staff and senior management. The aim of the meetings was to develop a coherent agenda for collection and assessment of data. Surveys were also conducted through Zaskin College social networking page to draw out student views relating to their experience as learners. The results were assembled and used as evidence in the student submission.

Detailed findings about Zaskin College

1   Academic standards

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

1.1   The College has clear internal systems for managing academic and professional standards, appropriate to its present stage of development. The committee structure consists of the Academic and Quality Assurance Board and the Tutor Development Committee. The Board is chaired by the Director who takes overall responsibility for standards, in association with the Quality Assurance Coordinator. The Quality Assurance Coordinator is responsible for internal evaluation, staff training and continuing professional development.

1.2   There is effective informal and formal communication between senior managers and teaching staff. All staff attend Academic Review meetings twice a year and, at the request of the Senior Management Team, can attend the Academic and Quality Assurance Board to respond to relevant issues, such as the recent Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) changes to the syllabus by the awarding organisations. Teaching staff also attend regular meetings of the Tutor Development Committee.

1.3   The College has sound administrative procedures and has begun to develop more formal records of all its meetings. A dedicated Accreditation Officer liaises directly with the awarding organisations, ensuring that changes and amendments are communicated effectively to senior managers and staff. The team considers that the oversight of the dedicated Accreditation Officer ensures consistent and effective compliance with the awarding organisations' requirements and is an area of good practice.

1.4   The College's Quality Assurance Policy sets out its responsibilities for meeting the awarding organisations' requirements. When supplemented by its policies on teaching and learning and internal verification, the Quality Assurance Policy provides a reference point for the strategic work of the biannual Academic and Quality Assurance Board. The review team considers it desirable for the College to review its separate policies in order to develop a comprehensive quality assurance framework that provides a central reference source for academic staff.

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

1.5   The College is effective in formulating its policies in line with the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*), including those relating to disabled students, admissions, assessment, academic appeals and complaints, and career advice. Senior managers actively support teaching staff to utilise the awarding organisations' reference points in designing teaching, assessment and feedback mechanisms. Awarding organisations' requirements are detailed in programme specifications and included in the induction process for new tutors.

1.6   Senior managers have developed guidance on the use of appropriate reference points in marking and providing feedback on formative assessment. Staff welcome this guidance, which supports their assessment practice and contributes to the enhancement of the student learning experience. Staff are required to maintain professional body membership and are supported to attend awarding organisations' training courses.

1.7   Awarding organisations' benchmarks are used as a point of reference to enhance teaching and formative assessment. Management and teaching staff have a clear and detailed understanding of the College's responsibilities for managing the different academic and professional standards set by each awarding organisation. This has been strengthened by the introduction of a policy on assessment and internal verification.

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

1.8   The College's arrangements with its awarding organisations do not include receiving feedback from external moderation. The awarding organisations only return limited feedback on students' examination performance, which the College scrutinises and responds to issues when they arise. In addition, the College complies with the internal verification responsibilities for IAM and LCM. The College's recently introduced Internal Verification Policy confirms that moderation and assessment is fair and consistent with the awarding organisations' requirements.

1.9   The awarding organisations do not formally require annual monitoring. As a result of this, and the limited feedback from external moderation, the College has introduced a range of internal mechanisms for assuring standards and is working towards a systematic process for annual audit, informed by a comprehensive evaluation of its performance data. These mechanisms include continuous monitoring and review of courses through internal moderation, biannual Academic Review meetings attended by all staff and student representatives, and a Programme Annual Report.

1.10   Academic Review meetings also scrutinise a wide range of external and internal data relating to academic performance and teaching quality, including the limited feedback from the awarding organisations on students' examination. Actions from the Academic Review meetings inform the Programme Annual Report, which is monitored by the Academic and Quality Assurance Board. In addition, the Academic and Quality Assurance Board has formulated a number of separate action plans, for example to improve the alignment of formative assessment with the ABE criteria and to respond to BAC recommendations. The team considers it desirable that a single annual review and action plan process be developed to better support the oversight of academic standards and quality assurance of provision.

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

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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 responsibilities for learning opportunities are clearly delineated in the College's management structure and by the awarding organisations. Additional rationales and validation requirements, including resources, are outlined during course approval and are well documented. The overarching responsibility for the quality of learning opportunities lies with the Director who manages the teaching team, assisted by the Quality Assurance Coordinator. The Quality Assurance Coordinator is also responsible for student feedback and student progression data.

2.2   Teaching staff's roles and areas of responsibility are clearly defined in contractual agreements. These include requirements for teaching and learning, lesson plans and schemes of work. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and benefit from a collegiate approach, including peer observation, reviews and staff training as prescribed in the Quality Assurance Policy.

2.3   The College follows the awarding organisations' criteria for curricula and assessment, which inform their own teaching methodology, for example the use of tutorial assistants, student support activities, research-based learning, practical application in information technology, lesson plans and schemes of work. The awarding organisations' agreements are clearly understood by teaching staff. The Director reviews examination results, remarking reports, staff and student feedback, and student progress. More specific and responsive staff input takes place as need arises, for example in March 2011 staff discussed formative assessment. This was reviewed again in May 2012 to confirm the effectiveness of the criteria.

2.4   Formative and summative assessment is assisted by mock examinations that enable students to experience examination conditions and gain valuable developmental feedback from staff, which enhances their learning experience. The feedback from staff is consistent and in line with the criteria set by the awarding organisations. Students welcome the opportunity to receive developmental feedback, which they confirm is central to their academic development. The review team considers the well targeted and specific support for students' preparation for summative assessment to be over and above that required by the awarding organisations, and to be good practice.

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

2.5   The majority of the assessment activities, including examination and invigilation procedures, are aligned with the *Code of practice*, *Section 6: Assessment of students.* Students were fully conversant with the intended learning outcomes and felt well prepared to complete coursework and examinations. Staff are clear in their understanding of benchmarks and programme specifications in alignment with the awarding organisations' requirements, including levels.

2.6   Students receive comprehensive and detailed feedback on assessment conducted within the College. Feedback mechanisms are varied and include oral and written, individual and group, and in-class continuous formative assessment. The January 2012 Academic Review meeting highlighted the importance and principles of constructive feedback. Students confirmed that feedback was positive, constructive and helpful in assisting and advancing their learning. The team confirms the College's effective engagement with the *Code of practice*, *Section 6: Assessment of students*.

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

2.7   The College policy manual contains the Teaching and Learning Strategy that outlines core principles. These include: flexible and distributed learning, feedback, assessment, progression and guidance on implementation and monitoring. Reviewers found that while staff were not fully aware of the current policy, they were, however, fully conversant with current teaching and learning methodologies. Staff meet regularly to share good practice and derive useful information from external sources, including attending the awarding organisations' training. The team noted a number of ways in which staff support each other, for example, to find solutions to difficult teaching groups, and varying teaching styles.

2.8   The quality of teaching is maintained through ensuring that all teachers have teacher qualification status and also through regular evaluation of lesson observations and peer reviews. All lesson observations and peer review sessions are followed up with feedback from a member of the senior management and supported by a written evaluative summary for the tutor. A summary of the observation outcomes provide a Best Practice Policy for Effective Teaching for all staff. Unqualified staff are required to complete the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) qualification.

2.9   The majority of students were very positive about the quality and variety of teaching and assessment methods employed by staff. These included: poster work, group work, blended learning, and quizzes with independent learning highlighted as one of the most positive aspects of the teaching. Student satisfaction with the standard and quality of teaching and learning and general education is high with 62 per cent extremely satisfied and 29 per cent very satisfied. This was confirmed by students during the visit.

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

2.10   Students were very positive about the advice given prior to enrolment, during enrolment and pre-arrival onto programmes of study. This includes the use of well informed recruitment consultants. Students were especially complimentary of the usefulness of the pre-arrival guide and the personal pre-enrolment visits by staff. On arrival to the UK, students are provided with a range of additional support by administrative staff, including the opening of bank accounts, registering with the NHS, and accessing support in learning. All students have access to weekly support on legal and careers advice and information technology workshops. Emergency support for newly arriving students is available, if required, for example the provision of emergency accommodation.

2.11   The induction programme provides academic and pastoral support and mentoring. Students are provided with a comprehensive induction pack, including a student handbook, and module and course handbooks. In addition, these are all available on the College virtual learning environment. Students reported the usefulness of this information. Students and staff were fully conversant with academic referencing and plagiarism. Students are supported by a comprehensive series of support methods, including an online plagiarism tutorials and lectures on effective academic referencing and citation as part of the curricula. The College operates a robust student attendance policy, working in compliance with the UK Border Agency requirements. The Administrative Officer tracks attendance of students daily.

2.12   Student support includes a formal student/tutor meeting at least once each term. In practice, however, staff are available informally and outside of timetabled hour, through email and other social media resources. Students are appreciative of the access to, and information and advice they receive from, the staff. Students identified with restricted language ability are given an opportunity to obtain additional English language support.

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

2.13   The College outlines the importance of training and staff development through regular staff review and appraisal processes at least once a year. The Staff Training and Development Policy outlines principles, objectives and mechanisms, including induction, Performance and Development Review, and initial professional development programmes. The College requires that all academic staff without a comparable qualification complete the PTLLS. Staff also engage with professional association and industry contacts to enhance their professional development. In-house training also takes place, for example dyslexia training and the use of the virtual learning environment. Email is used to target and inform

staff and promote improvements in support of teaching and learning. The Quality Assurance Coordinator is responsible for staff development and training.

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

2.14   The College has an ongoing refurbishment programme and current classrooms and meeting rooms are fully equipped with up-to-date multimedia facilities. Since the last BAC visit in January 2012, the College has responded expediently to all the recommendations, including the soundproofing of classrooms and signposting of rooms to match timetabled information.

2.15   The College provides a range of electronic books and e-library facilities, with all study manuals available on a 24-hour basis. The virtual learning environment includes lecture notes, teaching material and a discussion forum to assist in the delivery of programmes. Student and staff both agreed that this was a well used and useful resource. Staff also have access to the student management system for recording assessment. The ABE and IAM also provide online resources, including access to course syllabuses and past papers. Students found all resources very helpful, although some indicated they would like more textbooks in the library. However, when they did request a textbook they usually received it within a week.

2.16   The College gathers student views from a combination of survey questionnaires and focus groups providing quantitative and qualitative data. Students give feedback at the end of each term. Feedback is reviewed by the Quality Assurance Coordinator assisted by three team members from academic and administrative staff.

2.17   Potential students are made aware of the College's Disability Policy prior to admission. Staff are provided with supporting guidelines and have recently undergone training for dyslexic awareness. Visually impaired candidates are provided with recorded lectures.

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

3   Public information

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

3.1   The College produces clear and comprehensive material targeted at both applicants and students. In addition to printed marketing material, such as the prospectus, the College produces a pre-arrival guide, audio and video advertisements (both local and international), and web-based materials. Confirmation of the reach of their marketing strategy is provided through a review of external engagement with the website and social media contacts. The Contact Us page on the website contributes to measuring the satisfaction level of potential students. Students confirm that the pre-arrival guide provides helpful and supportive information. The team considers that the pre-arrival guide prepares students well for life and study in the UK and is an area of good practice.

3.2   The College also provides pre-arrival information for applicants with a disability and provides links to other sources of information. Staff travel abroad regularly to meet international agents to check on the information that is provided on behalf of the College; during these overseas visits, applicants are interviewed.

3.3   The student induction pack includes: course guides, career advice, student support, news, local community details, the awarding organisations' information, academic calendar and information about the Students' Union. It was initially developed following informal links with the awarding organisations and remains an important part of the College's strategy to enhance the student experience. Course handbooks maintain a College identity that is supported by the general College Handbook and other documents issued to all students. Together with those on the website, these documents provide accurate and essential information, which is welcomed by students.

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

3.4   The Publications Policy clearly details the College's responsibilities in regard to marketing and publicity material. The current version of this policy was approved in September 2011 and, as with most of the College's policy documents, a review date is identified. Other key policies are documented elsewhere, for instance the Data Protection Policy is published within the Employee Handbook. The Quality Assurance Coordinator oversees the preparation of publicity materials and the Director checks these for accuracy and completeness. Overviews of the required teaching materials are listed in the staff manual.

3.5   The use of the virtual learning environment is central to the distribution of teaching materials. Regular training is available to ensure effective staff engagement with the virtual learning environment resource and that they are competent in uploading materials to enhance the student learning experience. The College recognises that students may not have access to the virtual learning resource when they are away from the College and ensures that printed copies of all essential documents are available. Following a recent update to the virtual learning environment, all materials have been re-uploaded. The resultant audit has confirmed that all documentation is relevant and current.

3.6   The College distributes programme specifications to all students within the student induction packs and is diligent in ensuring that these are correct and user-friendly. Two forms of programme specifications are produced for each course: the extended and the shortened. The extended form contains intended learning outcomes directly taken from each module offered within the award, but does not identify the module from which they are drawn. This leads to an excess of programme-level intended learning outcomes. For example, the Diploma in Business Management, a one-year long course, has 35 learning outcomes, some of which may not apply to all students. The College is currently undergoing a review of programme specifications to assure version control between printed and on-line versions.

3.7   Neither form of the programme specifications contains course aims. The shortened version, however, does include a brief description of each course's purpose. Although the level of the award is listed, neither the levels, nor the credit weighting, of each of the modules is listed in either form of the programme specifications. There is no requirement by any of the awarding organisations for programme specifications to be approved before distribution. These documents are not as complete as those normally produced by, or in conjunction with, an awarding organisation. The team considers it advisable that the College reviews and implements appropriate changes to the form and content of its programme specifications to ensure accuracy, completeness and effectiveness for all stakeholders.

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

Action plan[3]

Zaskin College action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight May 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 oversight of the Accreditation Officer which ensures consistent and effective compliance with the awarding organisations' requirements (paragraph 1.3)	Accreditation Officer to attend workshops/training with awarding bodies to better understand their procedures	September 2012	Quality Assurance Coordinator	Positive report from the Tutor Development Committee relating to compliance with additional awarding body requirements	Director	Zaskin College Student Satisfaction Survey; awarding body meetings/report
	Accreditation Officer to attend Students' Union meetings	19 Nov 2012		10% improvement in student satisfaction through the Zaskin College Student Satisfaction Survey		
• the use of the well targeted and specific support for students' preparation for	Maintain the practice with improved examination policies and awarding body	Quarterly; next meeting in September	Academic and Quality Assurance Board	Aim to achieve 5% improvement in student performance in	Quality Assurance Coordinator	Summative assessment results

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

summative assessment (paragraph 2.4)	specific examination procedures	2012		formative assessment Positive report by the Academic and Quality Assurance Board acknowledging 5% improvement		Student progression Evaluative Review by Academic and Quality Assurance Board
• the use of the pre-arrival guide which prepares students well for life and study in the UK (paragraph 3.1).	Continuous updating and review with version control and date	Monthly September 2012	Administrative Staff	Maintain and improve student satisfaction by 15% measured using new induction feedback system	Academic and Quality Assurance Board	Induction feedback Zaskin College Student Satisfaction Survey
Advisable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:						
• review and implement appropriate changes to the form and content of its programme specifications to ensure accuracy, completeness and effectiveness for all stakeholders (paragraph 3.7).	Review of programme specifications with inclusion of credit weighting, module level using a template format to ensure accuracy, completeness and effectiveness for all stakeholders	Dec 2012	Quality Assurance Coordinator	Uniform programme specifications which assists students in understanding the learning and teaching methods	Academic and Quality Assurance Board	Zaskin College Student Satisfaction Survey Module feedback

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:						
• review its separate policies to develop a comprehensive quality assurance framework that provides a central reference source for academic staff (paragraph 1.4)	Consolidate and review policies manual and make it useful as central reference	Dec 2012	Quality Assurance Coordinator	Achieving a quality assurance framework which acts as central reference source for administrative and academic staff for policy guidance Staff awareness and engagement regarding policies Each new employee to sign declaration of reading and understanding policies	Director	Tutor Development Committee (minutes of the meeting) Staff feedback
• develop a single annual review and action plan process to better support the wider oversight of academic standards and quality assurance of the provision (paragraph 1.10).	To consolidate segregated action plans to be included in the Annual Review process to form a single report	June 2013	Academic and Quality Assurance Board	Comprehensive and consolidated action plans to form part of the Annual Review This will have wider oversight of academic standards and	Director	Annual Review of reports and action plans by Director to ensure academic standards are well maintained

				quality assurance provision Measured in Annual Review meetings		

About QAA

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

QAA's aims are to:

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

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

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

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

Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

awarding organisation An organisation with the authority to award academic qualifications
located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework for England and Northern Ireland (these
qualifications are at levels 1 to 8, with levels 4 and above being classed as 'higher
education').

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

quality See **academic quality**.

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

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

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