



# **Aldgate College London**

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

June 2012

## Key findings about Aldgate College London

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in June 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 Tourism and Hospitality Executives.

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

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 robust procedure for the recognition of prior learning (paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5)
- the variety of effective support systems for students (paragraphs 2.10 and 3.3).

### 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:

- finalise the Quality Assurance Manual (paragraph 1.2)
- ensure a consistent approach to the minuting of Academic Board and the tracking of decisions and proposed actions (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.1)
- implement the planned, more formal, annual monitoring of programmes and the College Quality Review (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.1)
- adopt a strategic approach to the identification, provision and accessibility of required learning resources (paragraph 2.16)
- fully implement and monitor the effectiveness of the procedure for checking public information (paragraph 3.5)
- clarify the penalties for late submission of work and communicate these to students (paragraph 3.8).

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

- revise and implement the Assessment, Learning and Teaching Strategy (paragraph 2.2)
- continue to raise staff awareness and understanding of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraph 2.6)
- systematically record and evaluate college-wide staff development (paragraph 2.14)
- progress the plans to fully implement the virtual learning environment (paragraph 3.4).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)<sup>1</sup> (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Aldgate College London (the provider; the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the Association of Tourism and Hospitality Executives. The review was carried out by Dr Elizabeth Briggs, Dr Elizabeth Smith, Professor Graeme White (reviewers), and Mr Michael Ridout (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included the Quality Assurance Manual, policies and procedures, the programme specifications and an accreditation report by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges, supplied by the provider and its awarding organisation. Evidence was also gathered from meetings with staff and students and from the scrutiny of samples of student work.

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

- Association of Tourism and Hospitality Executives
- the Academic Infrastructure
- the Accreditation Service for International Colleges.

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

The Aldgate College London (the College) was established in April 2010 after a decision of the Board of Directors of London Corporate College to establish an additional college as part of their business strategy. The College is located in one campus on one floor of a building in Aldgate East, London, close to Brick Lane. The College commenced operation in 2011 and offers courses from level 5 to level 7 in business management; at the time of the review 50 students were enrolled on programmes in these areas. The College employs four full-time operational staff and three part-time teachers. In April 2011, the College was accredited by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges and received commendation for 'Premises and Health and Safety'.

The Directors' mission is for the College to provide higher education to international students who intend to pursue studies in the UK that are cost-effective and responsive to their career needs. The College endeavours to provide education to those individuals who have the required intellect and desire to achieve their higher education goals within a professional, ethical, supportive and cost-effective environment.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes listed beneath their awarding organisation and with full-time equivalent student numbers in brackets:

### **Association of Tourism and Hospitality Executives**

- Extended Diploma in Management - level 5 (28)
- Diploma in Management - level 6 (10)

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<sup>1</sup>[www.gaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4](http://www.gaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4).

<sup>2</sup>[www.gaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://www.gaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx).

- Diploma in Strategic Management - level 7 (7)
- Diploma in Healthcare Management - level 7 (5)

## **The provider's stated responsibilities**

The College currently works with the Association of Tourism and Hospitality Executives. The awarding organisation provides the curricula and externally verifies the assessments. The College is responsible for learning and teaching, learning resources, student support, staff development and public information for all awards. The College is approved to offer courses on behalf of the Institute of Administrative Management, although there are no students currently enrolled on these courses.

## **Recent developments**

In October 2011, the College appointed a Quality Manager (who is also responsible for quality at London Corporate College). This appointment was based on an identified need to provide a more consistent and coordinated approach to the College's quality assurance and improvement activities. The appointment has helped the College to reflect on its management and operation of systems and approaches to quality improvement. The College has responded to student feedback by providing additional resources and is developing a virtual learning environment that has been well received by students. The experiences gained will be used to roll out the virtual learning environment at London Corporate College. In February 2012, a Student Union was formed and this has helped in developing an environment where students feel able to feed back, contribute and discuss matters relating to their college experience.

## **Students' contribution to the review**

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. The students prepared their submission in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. This was produced, after a briefing on its purpose by the College, by members of the newly formed Student Union. Members of the Student Union were present at both the preparatory meeting and review visit itself. The review team found the students to be very enthusiastic and their contribution was both informative and helpful.

## Detailed findings about Aldgate College London

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College manages effectively its responsibilities for the management of academic standards. Its responsibilities in offering higher education programmes are clearly set out in the awarding organisation's agreements, and are managed by the College Academic Board which reports to the Board of Directors. The responsibilities of the Directors and the Academic Board are defined in the Quality Assurance Manual. Both awarding organisations, the Association of Tourism and Hospitality Executives and the Institute of Administrative Management, provide Centre Approval Certificates, programme specifications and intended learning outcomes. In 2011, the College received its first accreditation from the Accreditation Service for International Colleges with commendation for premises, and for health and safety.

1.2 There are comprehensive, though still emerging, processes for the effective management of academic standards. A newly appointed Quality Manager is responsible for developing and overseeing the quality assurance systems on behalf of the Academic Board. The College Policies and Procedures Handbook is currently being subsumed within an overarching, definitive version of the Quality Assurance Manual. The intention is to provide a clear focus and guidance to staff on quality assurance procedures and policies before the start of the next academic cycle. The team recommends that it is advisable for the College to finalise the Quality Assurance Manual. The Quality Manager has recently raised awareness of quality issues with staff and students, and is a crucial link between management, staff and students to improve quality assurance. The Business Course Leader is the link with the Association of Tourism and Hospitality Executives and the Institute of Administrative Management and is responsible for student registration. At the programme level, course coordinators and subject tutors are responsible for the quality of their programmes.

1.3 Scrutiny of minutes of all Academic Board meetings demonstrated a lack of attention to detail, which made it difficult to track the progress of some decisions and planned actions. The team recommends that it is advisable for the College to ensure a consistent approach to the minuting of Academic Board and the tracking of decisions and proposed actions. The team learnt that the Academic Board will have central oversight of annual programme monitoring at the end of the current session, conducted by the course leader and the business development officer, to review academic standards, the effectiveness of programmes and to identify the potential for enhancements. These first programme monitoring reports, incorporating student feedback, attendance data, examination results, collated retention and progression statistics and the outcomes of teaching observations, will then inform the College Quality Review Report scheduled for the end of 2012. The College is aware that these new processes, replacing the current procedures, have the potential to enhance its oversight of academic standards as part of the quality assurance cycle. The team recommends that it is advisable for the College to implement the planned, more formal, annual monitoring of programmes and the College Quality Review.

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

1.4 The College makes effective use of external reference points to ensure the management of academic standards. The awarding organisations use specific criteria of the Qualifications and Credit Framework and issue clear guidelines, programme specifications and intended learning outcomes to the College, which are used by the College to deliver the curriculum. The team identified and considered the robust procedure for the recognition of prior learning to be good practice.

1.5 The College programmes are related to the correct levels of *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ), although the awarding organisations do not explicitly use the FHEQ. The team confirmed with the students that they are studying on appropriate programmes, delivered at levels which match their prior learning and with challenging assessments.

1.6 The College has taken steps recently to familiarise staff with the Academic Infrastructure and increase awareness of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*), through workshops and meetings addressing the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*. The team considered that the College also aligns its policies and procedures with other sections of the *Code of practice*, for example *Section 5: Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters*.

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

1.7 Assessments for the Association of Tourism and Hospitality Management are set by the College, which conducts first marking and internal verification, following the awarding organisation's guidelines, with final moderation by the external verifier from the awarding organisation. An external verifier from the awarding organisation has recently provided internal verification training for College staff.

1.8 Although there are no current registered students on the Institute of Administrative Management programmes, the agreement with the College specifies that all assessments for mandatory units are set by the awarding organisation, assessed internally and then moderated by the Institute. Optional units use the Institute's assignments, which are marked by the College to marking schemes provided by the Institute, prior to moderation by the external verifier.

1.9 The College appoints the internal verifiers to oversee validity and consistency of assessment procedures. It had not had its first meeting with the external verifier at the time of the review visit. The team was informed that the external verifier's reports will be considered by the course leader, subject tutors and the Principal, who will then devise an action plan and review good practice. The team saw evidence of marking and internal verification of a sample, from the Association of Tourism and Hospitality Management level 7 programmes, of formative and summative assessments, in line with the awarding organisation's requirements.

1.10 The College operates a teaching observation procedure to assure itself of the quality of teaching appropriate to the maintenance of academic standards; and, where issues are raised, support is offered through training and development.

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 organisation.

## 2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The management and enhancement of learning opportunities is effective, although there is a need for a more formal and systematic approach to annual monitoring and the minuting of Academic Board. However, regular student evaluation enables the College management to obtain an oversight of the learning experience.

2.2 The College's Assessment, Learning and Teaching Strategy embraces such features as 'employment focused learning', 'an appropriate balance of formative and summative assessment', and pedagogical staff development. The College acknowledges, however, that while much of this applies in practice, little reference is currently made to the Strategy. It is intended that a revised Strategy, with greater emphasis on subject-specificity, will be presented to the Academic Board for discussion and agreement. The team recommends that it is desirable for the College to revise and implement the Assessment, Learning and Teaching Strategy.

2.3 Both in their formal submission and in meeting the review team, students were complimentary and enthusiastic about the overall quality of teaching but critical of limited learning resources, an issue to which the College management had partly responded through additional purchases.

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

2.4 The College makes external reference points in the enhancement and management of learning opportunities. The College values its recognition by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges and also relies on its awarding organisations as external reference points. For example, curriculum content and development, programme specifications and learning outcomes are invariably the responsibility of awarding organisations rather than of the College.

2.5 At course level, liaison between the College and the awarding organisation is maintained through the course leader and internal verifier on the one hand and the external verifier on the other. At the time of the review, no work had yet been scrutinised by an external verifier, but the team did see evidence of pedagogical training provided for College staff by the awarding organisation.

2.6 The College recognises in its self-evaluation that 'academic quality is the responsibility of every single staff member' and accordingly staff have begun to familiarise themselves with elements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), with an expectation that it will lead to greater systematisation of practice. The team recommends that it is desirable for the College to continue to raise staff awareness and understanding of the Quality Code, especially those sections dealing with assessment, learning and teaching, and programme monitoring and review.

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

2.7 Measures in place to assure the quality of teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory. However, implementation of the recommendations in section 1 concerning greater formalisation of annual monitoring and of the minuting of Academic Board would offer the College much greater assurance than currently applies.

2.8 The Principal maintains oversight of course delivery, with responsibility for verifying tutors' schemes of work, observing teaching and conducting meetings with tutors based upon their unit monitoring forms. Although these duties are sometimes carried out by course leaders, the team was satisfied, from its meetings with staff and students and from completed forms, that this system of close scrutiny is both implemented and recorded. It is the intention that observations of teaching will feed into tutors' performance reviews, as is established practice at London Corporate College.

2.9 The College also receives information about tutors' performance from evaluation questionnaires completed by students. Students took the opportunity to comment seriously, but the team considered that the scope of the questions might be broadened to embrace their full learning experience, beyond the current focus largely on the tutor's conduct and style.

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

2.10 The College has suitable mechanisms in place to assure the effectiveness of student support. A Student Union was initiated in February 2012 and is active in promoting student welfare and community life, through postholders such as the international officer and entertainment officer. It liaises frequently with the College's Head of Student Affairs, described by students as a 'bridge' through whom issues could be raised with the College management. The team noted the care taken by the College to offer students individual advice at admission, including on matters such as visas and accommodation; the accessibility of staff out of formal contact time, including by e-mail; the provision of a Student Handbook; and the efforts made by the College to draw students' attention to the Quality Assurance Manual. All this contributed to an 87 per cent overall satisfaction rate, according to the survey conducted in preparation for the student submission, to which nearly all students responded. The review team considers the variety of effective support systems for students to be good practice.

2.11 The team was able to see only a limited amount of feedback on assessed work, but the small sample showed detailed and supportive formative and summative feedback.

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

2.12 The College is reliant on part-time tutors on fixed-term contracts, so an active programme of staff development is very important to the maintenance of academic quality and standards. Both the Quality Assurance Manual and the Policies and Procedures Handbook - documents which the Quality Manager intends to combine into one manual - state a clear commitment to a staff development policy, but its implementation is not systematic at present.

2.13 College priorities are to ensure that staff meet the requirements of relevant awarding organisations and are capable of effective teaching, with the capacity also to act as internal verifiers of students' assessed work. Staff have received pedagogical training from an awarding organisation and the induction provided for all newly appointed staff has



recently been revised to give more emphasis to pedagogy and quality assurance; staff also receive training in use of the College's virtual learning environment. The well recorded system of teaching observation is a further source of staff development, and the team saw evidence of constructive advice being offered in this way. The team was also informed of encouragement and practical support given to staff to pursue higher degrees relevant to their discipline.

2.14 The team noted, however, that no reference to staff development policy appeared in the Staff Handbook and that there was no evidence that records were kept of the activity as a whole, to enable the College management to monitor take-up by staff on different programmes and assess the impact in terms of improved student experience against the outlay involved. The team recommends that it is desirable for the College to record systematically and evaluate college-wide staff development.

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

2.15 The means by which the College assures itself of the adequacy and accessibility of learning resources requires further refinement. The College is developing a virtual learning environment, based on a server on its own premises, and learning materials are being uploaded. There is an open-access computer suite and a small College library, although they are open only when the College is itself open, on weekdays in term-time. Students also have access to materials provided by their awarding organisation and some make use of other academic and public libraries in the locality. However, the senior management fully acknowledges that there should be an expansion of library services and enhanced library facilities feature in the College's Strategic Plan.

2.16 Although there is a well established system of student evaluation at the end of each course unit, the question on learning resources within the questionnaires used for this purpose only seeks a response on the suitability of 'textbooks and materials', not on their availability. The College recently responded to student evaluation by purchasing additional library material, but this arose largely from concerns expressed in the student submission. In meeting the team, students acknowledged some improvement and were most appreciative of the virtual learning environment, but reiterated dissatisfaction with limited learning resources; this was in the context of a generally very positive account of their experience at the College. The team concluded that, other than in respect of the new virtual learning environment, the College was being reactive, rather than proactive, in the provision of necessary learning resources. Given its aspirations to develop postgraduate teaching and research, it would be important for the College to explore access to other academic libraries, including those of nearby Universities with whom institutional arrangements might be negotiated. The team recommends that it is advisable for the College to adopt a strategic approach to the identification, provision and accessibility of required learning resources.

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 provides public information effectively through a range of suitable media. Responsibilities for disseminating information relating to the College's provision are clearly allocated between the awarding organisations and the College. The College website links directly to the awarding organisations' details of the courses provided and course outlines are included within the College prospectus, which is also available on the website.

3.2 All students now go through an induction when they receive copies of the awarding organisations' course details in hard copy. This includes clear information about teaching, learning, assessment and feedback. Students also receive a copy of the comprehensive Student Handbook, which includes information about College policies and procedures. A newly instigated staff induction process should ensure that all staff receive the Staff Handbook, Quality Assurance Manual and Policies and Procedures Handbook in the future. There are clear guidelines for the agents employed in countries targeted for recruitment of international students and students reported satisfaction with the information available to them prior to their arrival at the College.

3.3 The College is responsible for the provision of supporting information relating to the application process, admissions and fees and regulations, all of which are clearly presented on the website and in the prospectus and Student Handbook. Clear statements about terms and conditions of enrolment and the refund policy for fees are provided and key administrative documents can be downloaded. The website also signposts UK Border Agency information and information relating to obtaining visas, accommodation and health care.

3.4 A virtual learning environment is being piloted and is currently a basic repository for course-based information accessed from the student zone of the website. The introduction of the pilot virtual learning environment was a proactive step by the College and has been well received by students. Part of the website is also allocated to communications between students and publicising the activity of the College Student Union. The team recommends that it is desirable for the College to progress the plans to fully implement the virtual learning environment.

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

3.5 The College provides a comprehensive range of information to stakeholders and uses appropriate resources and networks to inform the choice of material to be presented. Information is presented by diverse means and signposting of the awarding organisation's information directly from the website helps to ensure that the information about courses is current. However, during the preparation for the review, the College identified a lack of rigour in its approach to ensuring the accuracy of public information. The College's Academic Board is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public information, but the College processes, including the management of Academic Board meetings, have been informal and, at the time of the visit, were not sufficient. The reviewers were told of a new systematic process for updating public information, which is now in existence. There is also evidence, exemplified by changes made to London Corporate College's prospectus, of the introduction of more rigour into the College's management of the accuracy and completeness of public information since the appointment of a Quality Manager. The team recommends that it is advisable for the College to fully implement and monitor the effectiveness of the procedure for checking public information.

3.6 Information for students, including core information and changes to courses or approaching deadlines, is effectively cascaded through the College by subject tutors and course leaders who use noticeboards, emails and the sharing of telephone details. The new student induction process will require students to sign documentation to acknowledge that they have received and understood the information which has been provided to them. The College had supported the students in the creation of vigorous and highly supportive union with effective lines of communication between this union and College administration.

3.7 Although they are not directly involved in assuring the accuracy and completeness of the College's information, there are opportunities for students to provide feedback on the information provided to them through formal and informal routes. The formal route includes questionnaire-based monitoring of the student experience and the informal route includes the availability of a member of staff responsible for student affairs.

3.8 Students were appreciative of the efforts made by staff to keep them informed and provide support to them during their studies at the College. Overall, the information they received was clear and consistent; however, there was some confusion on the part of students and staff over policies relating to late work submission and how this is communicated. The team recommends that it is advisable for the College to clarify the penalties for late submission of work and communicate these to students.

3.9 The College had a process in place to effectively assure the performance of agents recruiting internationally by setting clear performance standards and gathering feedback from students on the pre-admission experience provided by these agents.

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

## Action plan<sup>3</sup>

Aldgate College London action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight June 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the robust procedure for the recognition of prior learning (paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5)</li> </ul>	Report on the admissions, recruitment and processes for recognition of prior learning as part of annual College quality review	Dec 2012	Quality Manager	Awareness will be raised with staff regarding any issues that need to be addressed to further enhance the admissions, recruitment and processes for recognition of prior learning	Academic Board	Annual monitoring of programme(s) report and the annual College quality review report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the variety of effective support systems for students (paragraphs 2.10 and 3.3).</li> </ul>	Evaluate the support systems in place for students as part of the annual College quality review	Dec 2012	Quality Manager	Any gaps or matters that need addressing will be made clear and the College can build on the support systems to further enhance the student	Academic Board	Student feedback and the annual College quality review report

<sup>3</sup>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 organisation.

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 provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finalise the Quality Assurance Manual (paragraph 1.2)</li> </ul>	Remove any overlapping elements from the College handbooks and merge them into one, comprehensive quality manual	Nov 2012	Quality Manager	A more clear and concise quality manual with all the relevant reference points in one place for staff to use to maintain standards	Academic Board	<p>Presentation of the final draft of the Quality Assurance Manual</p> <p>This will be reviewed annually</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure a consistent approach to the minuting of Academic Board and the tracking of decisions and proposed actions (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.1)</li> </ul>	Adopt a standard format of minuting which incorporates the tracking and monitoring of decisions and actions required	Aug 2012	Quality Manager	<p>The College will be able to monitor and trace actions from previous meetings much more accurately</p> <p>A more formalised way of minuting will lead to better scheduling and more effective decision-making among all staff</p>	Academic Board (chaired by the Principal)	'Task tracking sheet' which the Principal oversees to determine whether issues raised in meetings are being completed or are on course
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implement the planned, more formal, annual monitoring of programmes and the</li> </ul>	Collection of identified data for annual monitoring of programmes	Sept 2012	Quality Manager	The College will be able to identify strengths and areas of improvement	Academic Board	The annual College quality review report

College Quality Review (paragraphs 1.3 and 2.1)	Conduct annual college quality review	Dec 2012 (thereafter annually during this month)	Quality Manager	relating to programmes offered  A wide ranging report on various aspects regarding college operations which will allow staff to identify issues that need to be addressed and acted upon	Academic Board	The annual College quality review report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adopt a strategic approach to the identification, provision and accessibility of required learning resources (paragraph 2.16)</li> </ul>	<p>Arrange consultations with local universities regarding access to their libraries</p> <p>Clarify and set up student access to online academic libraries and resources</p>	June 2013	Principal	Students will have access to adequate learning resources (hard copy and online)	Academic Board	<p>Student feedback</p> <p>The annual College quality review report</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully implement and monitor the effectiveness of the procedure for checking public information (paragraph 3.5)</li> </ul>	Implement the new system entirely and consistently for all aspects of public information	Sept 2012 (thereafter termly reporting)	Quality Manager	Accurate and up-to-date public information which can be traced and monitored more effectively	Academic Board	<p>Student feedback</p> <p>Monthly report to Academic Board on public information updates</p> <p>The annual College quality review report</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarify the penalties for late submission of work and communicate these to students (paragraphs 3.8).</li> </ul>	<p>Revise and make clear the assessment policy and procedure as part of finalising the Quality Assurance Manual</p> <p>Communicate this information to staff and students via the support systems we have in place</p>	Sept 2012 (thereafter termly reporting)	Quality Manager	The revised information is made available to students during inductions and reinforced using our student support systems	Academic Board	A report to the Academic Board on the management of student submissions
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>revise and implement the Assessment, Learning and Teaching Strategy (paragraph 2.2)</li> </ul>	<p>Revise the Assessment, Learning and Teaching Strategy to incorporate the relevant chapters in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) (<i>Chapter B3, Chapter B6 and Chapter B7</i>), the needs of the College, students and awarding organisation</p>	Nov 2012	Quality Manager	<p>Raised awareness and understanding regarding strategy among teaching staff through monthly in-house briefing events</p> <p>Improve student learning experience reflected through student feedback</p> <p>Improved standards of teaching through use of</p>	Academic Board	<p>The completed and revised Assessment, Learning and Teaching Strategy</p> <p>Student feedback</p> <p>Observation of learning feedback</p> <p>External verifier reports</p> <p>Assessed student work</p> <p>The annual College quality review report</p>

				observation of learning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to raise staff awareness and understanding of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraph 2.6)</li> </ul>	<p>Arrange further workshops for all staff</p> <p>Add awareness of the Quality Code to staff inductions</p>	Sept 2012	Quality Manager	<p>Raised understanding of the Quality Code will lead to staff being better equipped to understand the need to maintain standards and quality of learning opportunities</p>	Academic Board	<p>Staff feedback</p> <p>External verifier reports</p> <p>The annual College quality review report</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>systematically record and evaluate college-wide staff development (paragraph 2.14)</li> </ul>	<p>Implement an annual staff appraisal system which will identify staff development needs that helps inform the annual staff development and training plan</p>	Mar 2013	Quality Manager	<p>Improvement of standards</p> <p>Engagement with staff will mean clearer sight of aspects of continuing professional development that may be required such as awarding organisation requirements</p>	Academic Board	<p>Report to Academic Board regarding staff development</p> <p>Staff feedback</p> <p>External verifier reports</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>progress the plans to fully implement the virtual learning environment (paragraph 3.4).</li> </ul>	<p>Continue to raise awareness and train staff and students in the use of the virtual learning environment</p>	Oct 2012	Principal	<p>Student and staff engagement using the virtual learning environment with positive feedback</p>	Academic Board	<p>Student feedback</p> <p>Staff feedback</p> <p>The annual College quality review report</p>



## 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary). Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)<sup>4</sup>

**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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<sup>4</sup>[www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://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.

**RG 1016 09/12**

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© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2012

ISBN 978 1 84979 673 6

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Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786