London School of Management Education Ltd

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

January 2014

Key findings about London School of Management Education Ltd

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in January 2014, the Quality Agency for Higher Education (QAA) review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of Pearson and Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations.

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 information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Good practice

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

- the systematic and in-depth engagement of staff with the Quality Code and subject benchmark statements (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.2).

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 School to:

- establish explicit operating procedures for ensuring the effective implementation of its academic management and quality assurance policies and processes (paragraphs 1.3, 1.4 and 2.3)
- ensure that quality enhancement and action planning are formally embedded within all committee and reporting structures (paragraphs 2.1, 2.3, 2.8, 2.9 and 2.11)
- amend the website to ensure that it clearly identifies those academic programmes that are not currently running (paragraphs 3.2)
- produce a work placement handbook for the shared use of students, staff and employers (paragraphs 3.4).

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

- continue to update programme specifications in line with QAA guidance (paragraph 1.6)
- further develop student tutorial arrangements within the context of a formal policy and clear statement of entitlement (paragraph 2.7)
- build on the existing arrangements by formalising procedures for the annual identification, delivery and monitoring of staff development (paragraph 2.10)
- continue with plans to enhance the onsite library, taking account of the needs of students and programme learning outcomes (paragraph 2.13)
- increase the role of students in the development and evaluation of published information (paragraph 3.8).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](1) (REO) conducted at London School of Management Education Ltd (the School), which is a privately funded provider of higher education. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the School 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 Pearson and Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR). The review was carried out by Ms Ann Hill, Mr David Knowles, Mr Simeon London (reviewers) and Mr David Lewis (Coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](2).[2] Evidence in support of the review included a range of internal documentation; policy, procedure and strategy statements; records of meetings; and a range of information produced for students and staff, including handbooks, curriculum and teaching materials. The team looked at a sample of assessed student work and held meetings with staff and students. It considered external verifier reports, as well as the Educational Oversight reports published by the Independent Schools Inspectorate in 2012 and 2013.

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

- UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code)
- Qualifications and Credit Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- curriculum and assessment materials published by the awarding organisations.

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

The School is an independent college of higher education. Established in 2007 on the Docklands campus of the University of East London, it now offers education for adult students in modern office accommodation near the centre of Barking in east London. The School currently offers vocational programmes in education and management at Levels 5 and 7 on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. In addition, it has been approved to deliver a wide range of Level 3 programmes and a Level 5 HND Diploma in Health and Social Care, but these are not currently running. The School's mission is to provide affordable and high-quality training for educationalists, managers and aspiring managers that is innovative and global in perspective. It also has an overarching aim to facilitate the innovative skills required for careers in business, education and health and social care. The provision is delivered through an academic faculty, which is organised as three departments: Business, Teaching and Training, and Health and Social Care. The School had a successful Educational Oversight review by the Independent Schools Inspectorate in 2012 and a follow-up annual monitoring visit in 2013.

The School has 156 higher education students, 150 of which are on the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector. The large majority of students, about 97 per cent, are from the UK and the European Union. Many are eligible for student finance. Just over 60 per cent of students are female. The School has eight academic staff making regular contributions to the programmes, and a further three staff providing administrative and office support.

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/educational-oversight
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx

At the time of the review, the School offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations with student numbers in brackets:

Pearson

- BTEC Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership Level 7 (5)
- BTEC Diploma in Management and Leadership Level 5 (1)

Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)

- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector Level 5 (150).

The School's stated responsibilities

The School states that its delegated responsibilities are similar for both of its awarding organisations. It has extensive responsibility for assessment, including the setting and first marking of assignments, and the provision of feedback. The School also has sole responsibility for student admissions, guidance and support, staff development, resources, the collection and use of student opinion, and ensuring that information is accurate and fit for purpose. There is shared responsibility with each awarding organisation in respect of second marking, quality review, monitoring the quality of learning and teaching, student appeals and the content of published information, particularly module and programme documentation.

Recent developments

The main changes in academic provision include the introduction of Edexcel Higher National Awards in 2010-11 and the withdrawal of qualifications of the Association of Business Executives and the Association of Business Practitioners at the end of 2012-13. In addition, the past two years have seen a decline in the number of students recruited to management awards and a very sharp increase in the enrolments to the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector. The School is preparing for a six-yearly review of the Diploma, which is due to take place in the summer of 2014. It withdrew from its accreditation arrangement with the Accreditation Service for International Schools, Colleges and Universities in 2012, with the introduction of Review for Education Oversight. In 2013, following two successful visits by the Independent Schools Inspectorate, the School transferred to QAA for purposes of Review for Educational Oversight. In response to the two reports from the Independent Schools Inspectorate, the School has expanded the range of policies published on its website. It has also strengthened the arrangements for student engagement and has included pastoral care within the remit of a reconfigured Student Welfare and Pastoral Care Committee.

Students' contribution to the review

Students on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. The submission was provided in the form of individual student testimonials, presented as handwritten letters and short video clips. The School gave administrative and technical support for the collection of the testimonials and submitted them with the self-evaluation. Overall, the submission offered some useful student insights, but did not give the reviewers a coherent overview that could be used to inform their planning or inquiries. However, students made a valuable contribution to the review through the opinions gathered as part of the School's quality assurance arrangements and in a constructive meeting with the reviewers during the visit.

Detailed findings about London School of Management Education Ltd

1   Academic standards

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

1.1   The School has clear, straightforward and generally effective management and committee structures. The arrangements are appropriate for the management of standards and quality in a small institution. The School is governed by a Board of Directors, comprising the Executive Director and Principal. The Principal, with the support of designated managers, is responsible for all academic operations. Staff teams, led by department heads, have day-to-day responsibility for the delivery and assessment of the academic programmes.

1.2   There are well articulated lines of responsibility between the key School committees, each of which has suitable membership and clear terms of reference. The senior management team forms the Advisory Board, which has a strategic role, overseeing the work of all other committees. The Academic Committee, consisting of the Principal, Quality Assurance Manager and departmental heads, is responsible for all aspects of academic operations. It receives reports from the three departmental committees, which also fulfil the role of programme committees and are chaired by the Principal.

1.3   The School has developed an extensive range of formal policies and strategies to support the management of academic standards and quality, but is not able to provide an evidence trail to show that all are fully effective in practice. This is the case, for example, with the plagiarism policy. While many of the key policies have clearly defined purposes and outcomes, the School has yet to develop the mechanisms to embed them and measure their effectiveness. It is **advisable** for the School to establish explicit operating procedures for ensuring the effective implementation of its academic management and quality assurance policies and processes. These should include mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

1.4   The School has introduced a formal annual programme monitoring process, which would now benefit from further refinement. The departmental committees manage the existing process, drawing on internal and external evidence sources, including student feedback and external examiner reports. Monitoring outcomes are agreed at an annual programme monitoring meeting. The introduction of annual programme monitoring is valuable, but would now be enhanced by the systematic evaluation of key data, such as student achievement and the outcomes of teaching and learning observations. There would also be advantage in introducing annual reporting at the overarching School level.

How effectively does the School make use of external reference points to manage academic standards?

1.5   The School has made notable progress in familiarising staff with the Quality Code, both directly and indirectly. It has been diligent in fully meeting awarding organisation requirements and in following up all recommendations arising from the educational oversight visits of the Independent Schools Inspectorate. These activities have assisted the School in meeting many of the Quality Code's Expectations. In addition, the systematic and in-depth engagement of staff with the Quality Code and subject benchmark statements is an example of **good practice**. This engagement is ongoing and has been supported by a substantive and focused training event within the School. A systematic mapping of the provision against

the Quality Code is ongoing. Staff are extremely well informed about the Quality Code and display a high level of awareness of its importance and potential value.

1.6 The School has produced programme specifications for each award, but the self-evaluation acknowledges the need for further development. Different versions are published, one of which is in a handbook format and provides a compilation of detailed module specifications. Another is in the style of a short programme guide or prospectus. It is not clear that staff or students fully understand the function of the specifications or the need to have a single definitive version that provides a concise description of each approved programme and its learning outcomes, and which is more than an aggregation of modules. It would be **desirable** for the School to continue to update programme specifications in line with QAA guidance, ensuring that students and staff are informed about which is the definitive version.

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

1.7 There are well defined arrangements for the design, assessment and verification of assignments. These are meeting the requirements of the awarding organisations and reflect the indicators within *Chapter B6: Assessment of students and recognition of prior learning* of the Quality Code. There is evidence for this in the reports and feedback from awarding organisations, as well as the sample of assessed student work provided for the review. The student work confirms that assignment design, assessment criteria, marking and internal verification are being implemented appropriately. Assignment briefs are internally verified before being issued to students and a sample of assessor decisions is verified in accordance with the published policy. Assessment decisions are formally approved at meetings of boards of examiners.

1.8 The School makes strenuous efforts to promote good academic practice, through its policies and management of the assessment process. It has a strict approach to the submission of assignments and follows up all cases of suspected plagiarism. Consideration is being given to introducing new plagiarism software for the use of students and staff. The Harvard system of referencing has been introduced systematically in response to an external verifier's report.

1.9 The School is responsive to the reports of external examiners and verifiers. All reports are formally discussed at meetings of the Academic Committee and relevant departmental committees. Programme teams are required to respond to any recommendations, with progress being monitored by the Academic Committee. The reports and resultant actions are then considered as part of annual programme monitoring. The process ensures that external reports are given proper consideration and there is evidence that recommendations are dealt with promptly and effectively at programme level.

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

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1   The arrangements for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities are the same as those described in paragraphs 1.1 to 1.4 for managing academic standards. Although the management arrangements are well understood and regularly implemented, they do not give sufficient formal attention to the enhancement of the provision. This omission is evident in the published terms of reference of key committees and in the absence of procedures for the systematic setting and monitoring of actions against agreed targets. There are many examples of improvements being made to the quality of learning opportunities, helped by the high level of staff commitment. But these improvements do not take place within the context of formally monitored quality improvement plans or their equivalent. It is **advisable** for the School to ensure that quality enhancement and action planning are formally embedded within all committee and reporting structures.

How effectively does the School make use of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities?

2.2   Staff are able to demonstrate an extensive knowledge and understanding of *Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality* of the Quality Code in relation to the provision of learning opportunities. This is notable, for example, in relation to *Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education*, *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching*, *Chapter B4: Enabling student development and achievement*, *Chapter B6: Assessment of students and recognition of prior learning*, and *Chapter B7: External examining.* The School is committed to ensuring that its policies and practices are fully aligned with the Quality Code*.*

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

2.3   The School has a formal teaching and learning strategy which might be further developed by the introduction of action planning or other procedures for monitoring its use and impact. The existing simple list of precepts, though clear, does not properly reflect the obvious staff commitment to high-quality teaching. There is no obvious mechanism for informing and updating the teaching and learning strategy with feedback from related activities, such as the outcomes of teaching observations.

2.4   There are established processes for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, including formal teaching observations and regular feedback from students. There are two parallel approaches to teaching observation, one management driven and the other peer review. The termly management observations, undertaken by the Principal, as well as student feedback, are used to inform staff appraisal.

2.5   Student opinion is highly complimentary about the quality of teaching, as well as about the feedback received on assessed work. Staff employ a variety of teaching and learning methods, although the use of learning technologies, including e-learning, is at an early stage of development. The scrutiny of assessed student work confirms that written feedback is mostly helpful and being provided in accordance with awarding organisation expectations. Staff aim to provide feedback promptly, normally within a five-day target. Teaching staff and students on the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector are members of the Institute for Learning, which gives them potential access to a range of professional support.

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

2.6   The School provides a satisfactory range of student support, both academic and pastoral, all of which is overseen by the Principal. Students confirm that they feel well supported, highlighting the value of the close working relationship they have with staff. This creates a positive and supportive learning environment, which helps to ensure that initial informal support is promptly available.

2.7   Academic support is effective and valued, but the well regarded tutorial arrangements could be more explicitly defined. Students are enrolled in accordance with the clear admissions policy, which sets explicit entry criteria. The Administrative Manager is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy. All students have individual learning plans and one-to-one tutorials. They also maintain a reflective journal, which is reviewed during tutorials. Students confirm that tutorials are readily available and that agreed actions are followed up with staff. However, while academic tutorial support is clearly effective, neither staff or students are able to point to a formal procedure through which the tutorial requirements are identified and timetabled. It would be **desirable** for the School to further develop student tutorial arrangements within the context of a formal policy and clear statement of entitlement.

2.8   Students are clear about the additional support that is available, including learning support, help with identified disabilities, counselling and careers advice. New students are given a diagnostic assessment when their additional learning support needs are identified. If the School is unable to support a particular disability or other learning need, access can be arranged to external services. Careers advice is offered through materials on the virtual learning environment and individually by teaching staff. Overall, while students express satisfaction with the additional support they receive, it is unclear how the provision is formally evaluated and reported on.

2.9   The School has strengthened its mechanisms for gathering student opinion, in response to a report from the Independent Schools Inspectorate. It uses a Student Welfare and Pastoral Committee and student representatives, as well as student surveys and suggestion boxes to obtain and respond to student views. The School quality assurance arrangements do not include a formal procedure for collating the various sources of student opinion and producing an annual action plan to address matters raised.

How effectively does the School develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?

2.10   The clear staff development policy includes the criteria that must be met for receiving support, but does not have a mechanism for prioritising and planning development as an ongoing process. Valuable development activities do take place, including a comprehensive induction programme for new staff, training for teaching qualifications, assessment updating and the highly effective workshop focusing on the Quality Code. Although staff activities are recorded and some good practice is shared, the systems for evaluating the impact of training are undeveloped. The Principal undertakes annual staff appraisals, but the School is not able to demonstrate how the training needs of teaching and support staff, once identified, feed into formal development plans. The staff development policy includes a general statement on entitlement, but this is not quantified as a minimum expectation. It would be **desirable** for the School to build on the existing arrangements by formalising procedures for the annual identification, delivery and monitoring of staff development.

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

2.11   Resources are allocated within the context of a published learning resources policy, which has been satisfactory for the small provision, but has yet to respond to growing pressures, particularly on the library. The planning and allocation of resources are managed through the Academic Committee, but this appears to be a reactive rather than strategic process. Staff are aware of the need to further develop learning resources in line with the expectations of higher education.

2.12   The School has a highly committed team of academic staff, who are well qualified and suitably experienced. There is an effective recruitment process that ensures staff have the appropriate academic, vocational and teaching profiles for delivering the programmes. The management of physical resources has provided well equipped general teaching rooms and computer laboratory. Wi-Fi is available in the School and students are encouraged to use their own laptop computers. Students are enthusiastic about the potential of the School's developing virtual learning environment.

2.13   The self-evaluation acknowledges the need to enhance the range and scale of the library provision. The small onsite library has a limited range of specialist materials, restricted opening hours and no borrowing rights. It is a concern for students, who compensate for the limited provision by using external local libraries and online resources. The School subscribes to some e-learning databases for student use. It would be **desirable** for the School to continue with plans to enhance the onsite library, taking account of the needs of students and programme learning outcomes.

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

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3   Information about learning opportunities

How effectively does the School communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

3.1   The School has a clear understanding of its responsibilities for the publication of information about learning opportunities and communicates effectively with its students and staff. It produces a wide range of information, including a mission statement, prospectuses, student and lecturer handbooks, programme specifications, course outlines, advertising and promotional leaflets, and a variety of formal policies and strategies. It also makes some limited use of social networking sites. Most policy statements are contained within an overall Policies and Procedures document, a valuable reference source that is made available to the awarding organisations for scrutiny.

3.2   The School's website provides a wide range of valuable information, but is also potentially misleading for prospective students. The website is attractively laid out and easily navigated, offering clear information about the School and its programmes. Appropriate reference is made to the relevant awarding body or organisation. However, it includes a number of approved programmes that are not yet running, without making this clear in the programme descriptions. It is **advisable** for the School to amend the website to ensure that it clearly identifies those academic programmes that are not currently running.

3.3   Students confirm that the information they receive once enrolled in the School is accurate and sufficient for their needs. They are given a general handbook and a programme handbook, together providing a range of helpful information about life and study in London, and their academic programme. A structured induction includes the opportunity for key information to be highlighted and explained in more detail. Students get introduced to the School's virtual learning environment and to links with the websites of awarding organisations, where detailed policies and regulations can be accessed.

3.4   The School publishes explicit guidance about student teaching practice placements, but this is limited to lists of the relative responsibilities of students and the placement coordinator. Staff discuss the expectations of placements with those employers who agree to provide them. More substantive documentation is now required to underpin this critical area of the teaching Diploma, particularly given the additional employers needed as a result of the sharp increase in student numbers. It is **advisable** for the School to produce a work placement handbook for the shared use of students, staff and employers. This should formally articulate the responsibilities and expectations of each stakeholder, and include learning outcomes and all operational documentation.

3.5   The well structured virtual learning environment is valued by students, for whom it provides good access to core learning materials and a wide range of information. The site is still at an early stage of development and limited to the provision of staff-generated materials and basic electronic communication. The member of staff with designated responsibility for the site is aware of the potential for further development, including interactive learning and teaching functions.

How effective are the School's arrangements for assuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy?

3.6   The development, publication and monitoring of information is undertaken within the context of a clear public information policy. Staff roles and responsibilities are well understood and operate effectively, although they are not articulated within any definitive document. The Academic Committee has overall responsibility for all academic materials, while the Executive Director is responsible for any other publications. The system for version control over internal documentation has recently been strengthened.

3.7   There is effective oversight of the virtual learning environment, with the designated member of staff having sole control over all materials. This tight control helps to ensure that all postings are accurate and consistent with other information published by the School, as well as that of the awarding organisations.

3.8   The School has a formal process for monitoring its published information, which involves an annual review by the Academic Committee. The Quality Assurer has a specific responsibility for monitoring the website. Heads of department report changes to the requirements of awarding organisations and the School is responsive in ensuring that programme materials and information are kept up to date. While these arrangements are clear and largely effective, it would be **desirable** for the School to increase the role of students in the development and evaluation of published information.

> The team concludes that reliance **can** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Action plan[3]

London School of Management Education Ltd action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight, January 2014						
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 School:						
• the systematic and in-depth engagement of staff with the Quality Code and subject benchmark statements (paragraphs 1.5 and 2.2).	Continue and strengthen awareness and use of external reference points, including those of QAA, through briefings Gap analysis will continue and be reflected in changes to college policies which, in turn will be communicated to all staff	01.10.2014	Senior lecturer	Approval by external consultant and successful reports by regulatory and awarding bodies	Principal	Staff opinion to be consulted and Advisory Board to monitor
Advisable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the School to:						

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

• establish explicit operating procedures for ensuring the effective implementation of its academic management and quality assurance policies and processes (paragraphs 1.3, 1.4 and 2.3)	Provide routine evidence trails (eg meeting minutes, reports, management data, other output measures) to show that all procedures (eg plagiarism policy) are fully effective	31.07.2014	Principal	Evidence of effective implementation of policies Successful review of policy implementation within key reports	Executive Director	Committee staff opinion on the effective implementation of explicit procedures within policies. Evaluation by external consultant Success in next QAA annual monitoring visit
	Annual programme monitoring to be enhanced by the systematic evaluation of key data	31.07.2014	Principal	Auditable use of key data for monitoring purposes	Executive Director	Management/ Academic Committee opinion Staff opinion during programme review meetings
	Introduction of annual reporting at the School	31.07.2014	Principal	Critical analysis of all college activities drawing upon the outcomes of programme monitoring	Executive Director	Advisory Board evaluation of annual school report
	Review college policies on	31.07.2014	Principal	Procedures consistently	Executive Director	Programme Review Meetings

	management of academic standards and include explicit procedures for ensuring effective implementation and evaluation			implemented by staff		and feedback from Standards Verifier and Academic Management Reviewer
• ensure that quality enhancement and action planning are formally embedded within all committee and reporting structures (paragraphs 2.1, 2.3, 2.8, 2.9 and 2.11)	Teaching and learning strategy to be developed by the introduction of action planning and other procedures for monitoring its use and impact	01.10.2014	Principal	Production of a detailed teaching and learning strategy document with clear action plans for implementation at the programme level	Executive Director	Discussion of staff members and senior managers on document clarity and ease of implementation
	Revise terms of reference of key committees to ensure that enhancement responsibilities are clearer.	01.10.2014	Principal	Ensure all enhancement responsibilities overseen by Academic Committee are clearly stated Embed enhancement activities in other key committee terms of reference	Executive Director	Seek opinions of Academic Committee, external consultant and Advisory Board on clarity of enhancement responsibilities
	Ensure that quality improvement actions are clearly monitored	31.08.2014	Principal	Quality assurance responsibilities within committee	Executive Director	Prepare a systematic evaluation of

	and evaluated in execution			structures should be clarified Prepare a quality assurance activity schedule for each academic year Send reminders on a regularly to ensure activities are being undertaken		quality improvement activities in annual reports Seek opinion of all Committee members during meetings and discussions
	Student support to be more formally evaluated and reported	31.07.2014	Student Welfare Officer	Revise end of term student questionnaire to include specific question on welfare provision and academic support	Student Welfare and Pastoral Care Committee	Seek the opinion of students and their representatives on welfare provision
• amend the website to ensure that it clearly identifies those academic programmes that are not currently running (paragraphs 3.2)	Make explicit the status of approved programmes as running or not yet running	05.02.2014 Actioned	Principal	Checked by external consultant	Executive Director	Student approval
• produce a work placement handbook for the shared use of students, staff and employers (paragraphs 3.4).	Placement handbook to articulate the responsibilities and expectations of each stakeholder, and include learning	01.05.2014	Student placement coordinator	Document should clearly explain the placement process and the expectations of student and	Academic Committee	Obtain feedback from students, reflective journals and placement mentors

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	outcomes and all operational documentation			placement mentor		
The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the School to:						
• continue to update programme specifications in line with QAA guidance (paragraph 1.6)	Differentiate in title and preface the different types of programme documentation Retain as 'programme specification' this title for only one set of documents Ensure a single set of overall programme learning outcomes	30.09.2014	Principal	A clear differentiation between, course handbooks, programme specifications, prospectus and student handbooks	Academic Committee	External consultant and student opinion
• further develop student tutorial arrangements within the context of a formal policy and clear statement of entitlement (paragraph 2.7)	Establish a formal procedure through which the tutorial requirements are identified and timetabled	01.10.2014	Principal	Publication of a formal student tutorial policy and procedure	Academic Committee	Commentary by academic staff and students
• build on the existing arrangements by formalising procedures for the annual identification,	Establish a mechanism for prioritising and planning development	01.09.2014	Principal	Training needs assessment for all new staff Training must be	Academic Committee	

delivery and monitoring of staff development (paragraph 2.10)				aligned with School needs Training needs may be informed by external points of reference and student feedback		
	Develop systems for evaluating the impact of training	01.09.2014	Principal	Formal mechanism for collecting a standard set of data to evaluate the effectiveness of staff development activities	Academic Committee	Advisory Board and opinion of staff members on the development of system for evaluating the impact of training
	Ensure that use of the School's annual staff appraisals can demonstrate how the training needs of teaching and support staff, once identified, feed into formal development plans	31.07.2014	Principal	Set achievable targets and action plan for development of all staff after formal appraisal in agreement with staff development plans	Executive Director	Advisory Board and staff opinion on appraisal process and its impact on their development
	The staff development policy to include a quantified statement on entitlement	31.07.2014	Principal	Amend existing staff development policy to include staff entitlement of 30 hours of Continual	Academic Committee	

				Professional Development per annum		
• continue with plans to enhance the onsite library, taking account of the needs of students and programme learning outcomes (paragraph 2.13)	Enhance the onsite library to expand the range of specialist materials, increase opening hours and introduce borrowing rights	01.10.2014	Executive Director	Successful expansion of onsite library with over 100 additional learning materials Establish borrowing rights for all learners	Advisory Board	Feedback from students and academic staff
• increase the role of students in the development and evaluation of published information (paragraph 3.8).	Include questions in the student survey(s) Regularly consult students in committee (regular agenda item)	31.07.2014	Principal	Include questions on website information, college documents and virtual learning environment information in student surveys	Student Welfare and Pastoral Care Committee	Student feedback

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/educational-oversight.

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 quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, higher education providers manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards The standards set and maintained by degree-awarding bodies for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standards**.

awarding body A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA .

awarding organisation An organisation authorised to award a particular qualification; an organisation recognised by Ofqual to award Ofqual-regulated qualifications.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed or recognised to perform a particular function. QAA has been recognised by UKBA as a designated body for the purpose of providing educational oversight.

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

enhancement The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

external examiner An independent expert appointed by an institution to comment on student achievement in relation to established academic standards and to look at approaches to assessment.

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

good practice A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

highly trusted sponsor An organisation 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.

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[4] www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx

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

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

programme (of study) An approved course of study that 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 (s) (of higher education) Organisations that deliver higher education. In the UK they may be a degree-awarding body or another organisation that offers programmes of higher education on behalf of degree-**awarding bodies** or **awarding organisations**. In the context of Review for Specific Course Designation 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').

quality See **academic quality**.

Quality Code Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of reference points for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the Expectations that all providers are required to meet.

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.

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 standards The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic award. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks for higher education qualifications** and **subject benchmark statements**. See also **academic standards**.