London School of Business and Management

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

June 2013

Key findings about London School of Business and Management

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in June 2013, 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 Pearson, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales.

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 bodies and organisation.

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 inclusive character of the Peer Observation of Teaching scheme (paragraph 2.4)
- the responsiveness of the School to the student voice (paragraphs 2.5 and 3.3)
- the support provided by the student development module and the course leader tutorial (paragraph 2.7).

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:

- implement procedures to strengthen the oversight of all aspects of the assessment of student work (paragraph 1.8).

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

- develop further the annual monitoring process to provide an overview mechanism for the review of academic standards (paragraph 1.4)
- develop further its procedures for documenting regulations and policies (paragraph 1.4)
- develop procedures for course design, approval and modification (paragraph 1.6)
- strengthen its engagement with external reference points to enhance the quality of learning opportunities (paragraph 2.2)
- enhance the consistency and quality of feedback to students (paragraph 2.8).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the London School of Business and Management (the provider; the School). 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 School delivers on behalf of Pearson, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales. The review was carried out by Mr Peter Cutting, Ms Ann Kettle and Mr Chris Maguire (reviewers) and Mr Maldwyn Buckland (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the School and in accordance with the *[Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)*.[2] Evidence in support of the review included annual monitoring and evaluation reports, external examiner reports, samples of assessed student work with internal moderation feedback, student and module handbooks and the self-evaluation document. Evidence was also gathered from meetings with academic, administrative and commercial staff.

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

- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)
- Pearson Information Manual
- subject benchmark statements
- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ).

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

The London School of Business and Management operates from one campus, located in the Bloomsbury area of London. The management, administrative and student support functions of the School are carried out in premises close to Birkbeck College (University of London), where all teaching takes place. Students are enrolled as members of Birkbeck College, (University of London) providing them with full borrowing rights to the Birkbeck College library and wireless internet access. Students also have access to social, recreational and sporting facilities through their membership of the University of London. As a result of the Review for Educational Oversight carried out in April 2012, the School achieved **confidence** judgements relating to the management of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities. In addition, **reliance** was placed on the accuracy and completeness of information that the School published about itself.

At the time of the 2013 review, the School offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding bodies and organisation and with student numbers in brackets:

Pearson
- HNC Business (286)
- HND Business (19)
- HNC Computing and Systems Development (128)
- HND Computing and Systems Development (3)
- Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership (8)

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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

Cardiff Metropolitan University
- BSc Business and Management (9)
- BSc Information Systems (4)
- MBA (4)

University of South Wales
- MBA (13)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The School has collaborative arrangements with Pearson, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales. The School is responsible for developing quality systems in accordance with awarding body and organisation requirements including procedures for the maintenance and monitoring of academic standards. The setting and first marking of Pearson assessments is the sole responsibility of the School, while responsibility for the setting and first marking of assessments for provision franchised from Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales is shared.

Recent developments

In September 2012 the School's Board of Directors appointed a non-shareholder to the position of Managing Director, acknowledging the need for a clear separation between ownership and academic management. Furthermore, the Board of Directors adopted a new Corporate Governance Framework and an organisational structure that clearly identifies the functions of key areas through the following four divisions: registry; academic; business development and student recruitment; and corporate services. A key aspect of these changes is the realignment of areas of responsibility within the registry and academic divisions.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. Student academic representatives confirmed at the preparatory meeting and during the review visit that they had coordinated the production of a student written submission utilising a variety of methods for communicating with fellow students to assess their views. The School confirmed that it had provided students with support and guidance, assisted in the gathering of data, provided access to QAA guidelines and access to the 2012 written submission. In addition, the School provided the students with a formal induction into the education oversight process and access to an academic link tutor. Students welcomed the support the School provided and confirmed that they had freedom and independence in compiling the submission document.

Detailed findings about the London School of Business and Management

1 Academic standards

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

1.1   Academic standards are managed through a new executive structure that includes the Principal, two associate deans and five course leaders. The academic executive functions are supported by the Academic Registrar, the Business Development and Marketing Manager and the Head of Corporate Services.

1.2   As a result of the 2012 strategic review undertaken by the School, a new Corporate Governance Framework was introduced in 2013. This Framework effected a number of changes to the executive and committee structure, including a clearer separation between the ownership and operational and academic management of the School; the appointment of a non-shareholder to the post of Managing Director, the combining of that post with that of the Principal; the replacement of the Academic Board by the Academic Committee, with a narrower remit, resulting in a closer focus on academic standards and quality, independent external membership, and student representatives; the reformulation of the Senior Academic Leadership Team in to the Senior Management and Leadership Team with greater devolvement of operational matters to divisional heads with a closer, deliberative focus on strategic rather than operational matters; and the transfer of external partner representatives from the Academic Board (as was) to the course committees.

1.3   The newly revised committee and executive structure, introduced in February 2013, offers closer oversight of the management of academic standards and incorporates the student voice. This development clearly seeks to address the concerns raised in the 2012 review report, particularly in relation to the breadth and burden of matters to be considered by the former Academic Board and the former Senior Academic Leadership Team and their capacity to give matters relating to academic standards in-depth consideration. However, a full academic cycle has not yet elapsed, and there is insufficient evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of current arrangements.

1.4   In the absence of current evidence the team explored with the School how it assures the effectiveness of its oversight of the management of academic standards. As provided for within the School's new Corporate Governance Framework, external examiner reports, annual monitoring and evaluation reports and the use of primary data are reviewed internally by the course committees, Senior Management and Leadership Team, the Academic Committee and external partners, with recommendations noted and appropriate actions taken. However, while the School reviews each instrument individually, it does not use a mechanism to provide an objective, summary analysis of the primary evidence or effectiveness of its provision. Such an overview mechanism would assist the School in its judgement of academic standards, alleviate the burden on its senior committees and identify trends. It is **desirable** that the School develops further the annual monitoring process to provide an overview mechanism for the review of academic standards.

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

1.5   The School accesses external reference points, including the FHEQ and Quality Code, through the specifications, curricula and syllabi for the courses run under agreement with its awarding bodies and organisation. While the Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Manual contains some of the School's key strategy documents, policies and procedures, it does not provide a comprehensive, coherent and contextualised set of institutional regulations and policies, or the procedures through which they are implemented. While staff demonstrated familiarity with the FHEQ, the Quality Code and relevant subject benchmark statements, there are few external reference points included within the School's own regulations and guidance. It is **desirable** that the School reviews its current processes and develops further its procedures for documenting regulations and policies.

1.6   The School currently offers its courses under accreditation from its awarding bodies and organisation, and confirms its strategy to expand academic provision in the future. Despite the Academic Committee having responsibility for oversight of curriculum development, the School does not have a process to determine which courses to offer, how they are approved, reviewed and modified and set parameters within which course teams have discretion over matters such as content, delivery and assessment. It is **desirable** that the School develops procedures for course design, approval and modification.

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

1.7   External examiners and verifiers, appointed by the awarding bodies and organisation, review the School's provision. The School has responded positively to address the concern expressed in the 2012 review report that it does not always comply with its own or awarding body and organisation procedures for responding to external examiner reports. It now requires that these are considered at Academic Committee as well as the course committees; and read by the associate deans, who may require additional action to be taken. The report template now includes a section for addressing issues raised by the external examiners and verifiers, and a requirement that the Registry monitor the receipt and responses to all reports.

1.8   The application of the School's internal verification procedures is variable. Examination of student work highlighted inconsistency in the application of internal verification procedures across courses and modules, including checking of assignments prior to circulation to students and the double marking of completed work. In some cases, variance between first and second markers appeared to be resolved by taking the mathematical average of the two marks rather than negotiated in relation to the marking criteria. It is **advisable** that the School implement procedures to strengthen the oversight of all aspects of the assessment of student work.

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 bodies and 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   Responsibility for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities is delegated to five course committees. Course leaders have managerial responsibility for ensuring students are provided with appropriate teaching and learning opportunities and academic support. Student representatives contribute to the management of the quality of learning opportunities through membership of Academic Committee, course committees and the Student and Staff Consultative Committee.

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

2.2   With the exception of the recently introduced Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manual, there are few explicit references to external reference points in other documentation, for instance, the self-evaluation document or the School's Academic Strategy 2013-16. Two external academic advisers have been included in the membership of the new Academic Committee. In providing advice to the Board of Directors and the Senior Management and Leadership Team, the Academic Committee is expected to have regard to relevant external academic and professional standards, regulatory and legal requirements and to the expectations of client organisations. One of the aims of the Academic Strategy is to provide a guest lecturer programme to be delivered by external industry professionals. It is **desirable** that the School strengthens its engagement with external reference points to enhance the quality of learning opportunities.

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

2.3   A teaching, learning and assessment strategy, approved by Academic Committee in March 2013, has been incorporated into the 2013-16 Academic Strategy. The School primarily relies on the annual monitoring process to assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced. Module monitoring reports, coordinated by the course leaders, draw on student attainment, attendance and progression data, student evaluation questionnaires and external examiner reports. These reports form the basis of internal course annual monitoring and evaluation reports, which are considered and approved by the course committees. The course committees also receive separate annual monitoring reports and action plans produced for the validating universities.

2.4   All new academic staff are required to participate in the Managed Teaching Observation Scheme and other academic staff are included if there is a concern about their teaching ability. A recently introduced Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme has a clear link to staff development, including those who are hourly paid. The Managed Teaching Observation Scheme, led by management staff, provides the School with key staff performance information, while the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme provides a developmental approach for staff to evaluate their peers to identify and share good practice. Following a period of training, the first cycle of observations has been completed and staff whom the team met confirmed the value of the process. The inclusive character of the Peer Observation of Teaching scheme is **good practice**.

2.5   The School listens and responds to the views of students through the Student and Staff Consultative Committee, student academic representatives and module evaluation questionnaires. The student written submission confirms that students appreciate the opportunity to comment on modules by completing questionnaires and participating in discussions in course committee meetings. Students are positive that their voice is being heard, confirming that the School includes their views in its decision-making. While the student written submission contained some criticisms relating to teaching and learning, students confirm that the School responds quickly to any complaints they raise about inadequate teaching. The responsiveness of the School to the student voice is **good practice**.

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

2.6   The School has a variety of mechanisms to assure itself that students are supported effectively. These include an Attendance Monitoring Policy and Procedure, designed for the early identification of at-risk students and an Academic Probation Scheme

that provides individual academic guidance for students identified as at risk at assessment boards. A Disability Coordinator provides support for students with disabilities and a recently appointed Academic Skills and Learning Support Manager conducts diagnostic testing to student groups according to their academic skills and learning support needs. Pastoral student welfare and support is provided by the full-time Student Welfare and Support Officer.

2.7   A compulsory student development module provides effective support to students in the early development of academic core skills. This encourages independent learning and critical thought, developing personal and professional skills through a range of elective topics. Students are assigned to groups following diagnostic testing. Course leaders hold weekly tutorials to provide course-specific academic support and, if required, arrange meetings with individual students. The support provided by the student development module and the course leader tutorial is **good practice**.

2.8   Concern was expressed in the 2012 review report about variability and a lack of consistency in the quality of assessment feedback given to students. According to the student written submission, while students appreciate the opportunity to ask for feedback before submitting assignments, they are concerned about the inconsistency and quality of the feedback following marking. Examination of assessed student work confirmed that many examples have few or no useful comments, either on the student work or mark sheets, resulting in a lack of opportunity for students to improve their performance. It is **desirable** that the School enhances the consistency and quality of feedback to students.

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

2.9   The School has produced a new Staff Development Policy which links to the Staff Appraisal and Development Scheme and the identification of staff development needs through appraisal. It is made clear that all full and part-time staff have equal access to development opportunities, but sessional or hourly-paid teaching staff are expected to undertake continuing professional development at their own expense. The policy incorporates an ambitious research and scholarship strategy, which the School intends to implement from September 2013. Academic staff who do not have a teaching qualification are sponsored to study for an external teaching qualification, usually through one of the School's validating universities, and have access to training and development opportunities at the partner universities. All staff are encouraged to participate in the annual Teaching and Learning Conferences organised by the School. Staff confirmed their satisfaction with the arrangements for their induction, appraisal and 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?

2.10   The students value the academic skills and practitioner experience of the teaching staff and greatly appreciate the high standard of teaching accommodation and library facilities. All students have access to the material on the School's managed learning environment and undergraduate students have access to awarding body and organisation online resources. From September 2013, the School intends to provide HND students with bespoke textbooks and access to a limited online library. A new virtual learning environment, currently under development, is strengthened by the appointment of a Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment whose remit includes the implementation of the e-learning strategy.

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 School's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?

3.1   The School publishes a wide range of effective information about its courses, awarding bodies and organisation, and student life. The delegated responsibility for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public information varies between the awarding bodies and organisation. For Pearson courses it is entirely the responsibility of the School, whereas there are elements of shared responsibilities with both Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales. Awarding body and organisation representatives confirm the effectiveness of the School's management of public information.

3.2   Students have access to appropriate, comprehensive and detailed information prior to admission and during their studies. The School's main channel for publishing information to prospective students is its website. Significantly remodelled as a result of the 2012 review report, the website is clear, comprehensive and easily navigable. Detailed course information is available providing very clear and effective guidance on course content, resources, environment, teaching and learning methods and assessment. Applicants are also provided with detailed and useful information about the School and living in London. The managed learning environment is a significant source of information for both students and staff, providing access to key documents, including course and module handbooks. The School is implementing an e-learning strategy with the development of a virtual learning environment and a student portal.

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

3.3   The School operates effective arrangements to assure the accuracy and completeness of public information through the Marketing and Communications Executive. This includes the monitoring and final sign-off of all information made available to applicants, students other stakeholders and the wider public. Course leaders have responsibility for academic content, with the Marketing and Communications Executive having full oversight and approval. A recent audit of the School's procedures for the management of published information has resulted in the development of a public information procedural document, designed to ensure the School's engagement with the Quality Code. The School's Technical Services Manager has sole responsibility for updating website content with final approval from the Marketing and Communications Executive prior to publication. The School has identified further website developments, in terms of design, and, as with the implementation of the e-learning strategy, the School has commendably used student opinion to ensure effective improvement. The responsiveness of the School to the student voice is **good practice**.

3.4   Students are provided with useful access to a well organised managed learning environment. Course leaders effectively manage this process which provides electronic copies of course handbooks, School, awarding body and organisation regulations, and additional course and module specific information. Students can also access School and awarding body and organisation regulations through the managed learning environment. Amendments to regulations are considered by the Senior Management and Leadership

Team prior to implementation. Students confirmed the effective and efficient management of the content of the managed learning environment.

The School is effective in managing the team of recruitment agents within the UK and overseas. Before entering into contractual arrangements with agents, the School undertakes a due diligence process, which includes careful checking of references. The appointment of agents is the responsibility of the Marketing and Communications Executive who effectively manages and monitors the activities of the agent team. For example, they carry out regular scans of the agents' websites and undertake 'secret shopper' activities to ensure accuracy and completeness of the information agents provide to prospective students.

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

Action plan[3]

London School of Business and Management action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight June 2013						
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 inclusive character of the Peer Observation of Teaching scheme (paragraph 2.4)	Continue with the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme, ensuring all academic staff (full-time, fractional and hourly paid (sessional)) actively participate in this staff development activity which has a clear link to the enhancement of our academic provision Continue to pay our hourly paid (sessional) lecturers who participate in the Scheme	- -	Course Leader responsible for the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme	100% staff engagement in the Scheme	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	

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[3] The School 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 bodies and organisation.

	Evaluate the effectiveness of the Scheme	May 2014	Course Leader responsible for the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme	Positive formal feedback from academic staff through the evaluation, and positive informal feedback through, for example, staff meetings	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Evaluation report prepared by the Course Leader responsible for the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment to present the evaluation report to the Senior Management and Leadership Team and Academic Committee
	Ensure any necessary changes are made to the Scheme, following the evaluation	Jun 2014	Course Leader responsible for the Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme	Outcomes of the evaluation report will be implemented by the Course Leader responsible for the Scheme and monitored by the Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment to present a report on outcome implementation to the Senior Management and Leadership Team and Academic Committee (and discussions will take place within the Teaching,

						Learning and Assessment Forum)
• responsiveness of the School to the student voice (paragraphs 2.5 and 3.3)	Continue to actively listen and respond to the student voice through our Student Academic Representatives (STARs)	-	Student Welfare and Support Officer		Academic Registrar	
	Ensure all our students understand the role of the STARs	Sep 2013				
	Continue to include our STARs as full members of our decision-making committees: the Course Committees and Academic Committee	-				
	Develop an annual calendar of STARs meetings which clearly aligns with the academic calendar and ensure this is made available to all our students	Sep 2013				

	Continue to ensure all STARs meetings feed into the Student and Staff Consultative Committee, Course Committees and Academic Committee. Enhance the effectiveness of how we communicate feedback from the Student and Staff Consultative Committee, Course Committees and Academic Committee to all our students	- Sep 2013				
	Formally evaluate the effectiveness of student representation	Mar 2014		Positive formal and informal feedback from our STARs (and all our students) about how we listen and respond to their opinions Positive formal feedback from academic and support staff about how we listen and	Academic Registrar	Formal evaluation of the effectiveness of student representation to be undertaken and discussed within the Student and Staff Consultative Committee (SSCC) The Academic Registrar to present the

				respond to students' opinions Such feedback to be obtained through, for example, Divisional Staff Meetings		evaluation report to the Senior Management and Leadership Team Minutes of the Student and Staff Consultative Committee and the Course Committees will evidence how we have responded to this formal evaluation and actioned any outcomes
• the support provided by the student development module and the course leader tutorial (paragraph 2.7).	Continue to incorporate the Student Development Module and Course Leader Tutorials as an integral component of every course, undergraduate and postgraduate Continue to undertake psychometric/ diagnostic testing for Year 1 undergraduate students, and group students according to	- -	Academic Skills and Learning Support Manager Course leaders Academic Skills and Learning Support Manager	Positive formal and informal feedback from all our students about the effectiveness of the student development module and course leader tutorials	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Module Monitoring Reports Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

Review	their academic skill needs					
	The development of students' academic skills will continue to be undertaken within the Student Development Module (and also within the Course Leader Tutorials)				
	Further enhance the Student Development Module and Course Leader Tutorials, by incorporating an ePortfolio (on a pilot basis in the first instance) the aim of which is: to support and facilitate independent and reflective learning by our students; and to facilitate the continuous measurement of student performance	Sep 2013	Academic eLearning Coordinator\n\nAcademic Skills and Learning Support Manager\n\nCourse leaders	100% use of the ePortfolio by students and staff involved in the pilot	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Evaluation of the use of ePortfolios by students and staff involved in the pilot, to include face-to-face focus groups
	Evaluate the effectiveness of the ePortfolio pilot and, if appropriate, make it	July 2014	Academic Skills and Learning Support Manager	Positive ePortfolio evaluation resulting in college-wide	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Implementation of the outcomes of the ePortfolio evaluation to be

	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	available to all our students			roll-out		monitored through the eLearning Focus Group and/or Teaching, Learning and Assessment Forum
	Recruit up to 8 full-time equivalent full-time and/or fractional module leaders throughout 2013-14 and develop such module leaders to enable their active participation within the Course Leader Tutorials	Feb 2014	Dean

Course leaders

Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment | | Managing Director and Academic Principal | |
	Introduce Module Monitoring Reports for the Student Development Module to ensure a formal process of continuous evaluation	April 2014	Academic Skills and Learning Support Manager		Dean	
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:						
• implement procedures to	Create the new full-time post of Director	Aug 2013	Dean	Appointment made	Managing Director and	Annual Appraisal

strengthen the oversight of all aspects of the assessment of student work (paragraph 1.8).	of Teaching, Learning and Assessment, advertise externally and make the appointment				Academic Principal	
	Ensure college-wide oversight of all aspects of the assessment of student work by:	Oct 2013	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment		Dean	Report submitted to the Senior Management and Leadership Team and Academic Committee by the Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	• reviewing the internal verification policies and procedures			Fully trained academic and support staff		
	• identifying training and development requirements for academic and support staff and the delivery of appropriate staff development sessions			100% of academic staff and relevant support staff to attend staff development sessions		
	• ensuring college-wide compliance with the internal verification policies and procedures			Full compliance with assessment policies and procedures		

	Establish a Teaching, Learning and Assessment Forum to include college-wide discussion of assessment policies and procedures, and the dissemination of good practice	Sep 2013	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	100% attendance of all academic staff (including hourly paid) who are not teaching at the time of the meeting	Dean	Minutes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Forum
Desirable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **desirable** for the School to:						
• develop further the annual monitoring process to provide an overview mechanism for the review of academic standards (paragraph 1.4)	Continue to undertake annual monitoring in accordance with our Corporate Governance Framework whereby Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports (which are course-specific) are discussed and approved within the relevant Course Committee, before progressing to the Senior Management and Leadership Team (the Senior Management and Leadership Team)	-	Course leaders		Dean	

	and Academic Committee				
	Continue to use Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports to inform our Annual Planning Cycle, and in particular: the development of Annual Divisional Business (and Improvement) Plans; and Divisional budget allocations	-	Heads of division		Managing Director and Academic Principal	
	Undertake a full review of our Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Procedures (including the format of the reports) to ensure the reports are both reflective and forward-looking	Feb 2014	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment		Dean	Course leaders, heads of division, the Senior Management and Leadership Team and Academic Committee to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the new Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Policies and Procedures
	Produce an overarching report which contains a summary analysis of the key findings from each Annual Monitoring and	Apr 2014	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	New reflective and forward-looking reports, together with an overarching report which contains summary college-	Dean	

	Evaluation Report to: assist the Senior Management and Leadership Team and Academic Committee in overseeing the management of academic standards; and better inform the Annual Planning Cycle			wide analysis, which will assist the the Senior Management and Leadership Team and Academic Committee in overseeing the management of academic standards (full and overarching reports will be provided), and which will better inform our Annual Planning Cycle as set out in our Annual Planning Cycle, in particular in informing the development on Annual Divisional Business (and Improvement) Plans		
• develop further its procedures for documenting regulations and policies (paragraph 1.4)	Further develop our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manual to provide a comprehensive, coherent and contextualised set of	Dec 2013	Dean Academic Registrar	Revised Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manual The Manual will be made available	Managing Director and Academic Principal	Dean and Academic Registrar to present a paper to Academic Committee.

	policies, procedures and regulations, to include explicit references to external reference points (to specifically include the UK Quality Code for Higher Education)			online All staff (academic and support) will be briefed: (i) on its availability; and (ii) about relevant sections within Divisional Staff Meetings and internal staff development sessions, to ensure full knowledge and engagement Feedback on the contents of the Manual will be obtained from staff within such meetings and sessions Feedback will additionally be obtained from students through the Student and Staff Consultation Committee	

• develop procedures for course design, approval and modification (paragraph 1.6)	Currently this is only of primary relevance to our Pearson BTEC courses, although it could apply to future non-university courses Enhance our current procedures for the internal approval and modification of such courses (for example: the selection of option modules; and further development of the assessment strategy), to include the following: • recommendations for modification of such courses will emanate from the relevant Course Committee • discussions will subsequently take place within the Senior Management and Leadership Team	Oct 2013	Managing Director and Academic Principal	Ensuring Academic Committee approves all modifications to current Pearson BTEC courses (and any future non-University course), and approves any proposal to introduce a new course	Academic Committee	Feedback from course leaders (through Course Leader Meetings) as to the effectiveness of the enhanced procedures This feedback will be considered by the Senior Management and Leadership Team to ascertain if there is a need for further changes (which will be referred to Academic Committee for final decision)

	• if approved by the Senior Management and Leadership Team for referral, the recommendation will be considered by Academic Committee which will make the final decision Proposed modifications will require supporting documentation and evidence (for example rationale for the change, market research, any resource implications (human and physical))					
• strengthen its engagement with external reference points to enhance the quality of learning opportunities (paragraph 2.2)	Review current key documents (e.g. the Academic Strategy 2013-2016) to ensure explicit references are made to external reference points (including the Quality Code) These key documents will be included in the	Dec 2013	Dean	Revised key documents which include explicit references to external reference points, including the Quality Code The procedure to be followed for the amendment of	Managing Director and Academic Principal	Feedback from heads of division, course leaders, module leaders, hourly paid lecturers and support staff

revised Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manual (see above)			each document is set out in our Corporate Governance Framework	
	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Staff involved in aligning the documents with external reference points will be briefed on the relevant reference points (including the Quality Code) and how to incorporate such reference points into the documents	Dean	
Continue to deliver internal staff development sessions which increase academic and support staff awareness of external reference points, including the Quality Code	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Increased staff awareness of, and engagement with, external reference points	Dean	Feedback from academic and support staff who attend internal staff development sessions

enhance the consistency and quality of feedback to students (paragraph 2.8).	Create the new full-time post of Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment, advertise externally and make the appointment The Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment will ensure college-wide oversight of all aspects of the assessment of student work (including feedback), to include:	Aug 2013	Dean	Appointment made	Managing Director and Academic Principal	Annual appraisal
	• reviewing current policies and procedures relating to both written and face-to-face feedback, to include the provision of written feedback through learning achievement records and/or plagiarism-detection software, and the exploitation of the	Oct 2013	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Fully trained academic and support staff Positive feedback from academic and support staff Full compliance with feedback policies and procedures Positive feedback included within: external	Dean	Report submitted to the Senior Management and Leadership Team and Academic Committee by the Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Evaluation included within: Module Monitoring Reports; and Annual Monitoring

	virtual learning environment for this purpose • identifying training and development requirements for academic staff with regard to the consistency and quality of feedback (both written and face-to-face) and the delivery of appropriate staff development sessions • ensuring college-wide compliance with feedback policies and procedures			examiners' reports; external verifiers' reports; and student surveys		and Evaluation Reports
	Establish a Teaching, Learning and Assessment Forum to include college-wide discussion of assessment policies and procedures (including feedback), and the dissemination of good practice	Sep 2013	Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	100% attendance of all academic staff (including hourly paid) who are not teaching at the time of the meeting	Dean	Minutes of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Forum

	Recruit up to 8 full-time equivalent full-time and/or fractional module leaders throughout 2013-14 and develop such module leaders with regard to ensuring the consistency and quality of feedback (written and face-to-face)	Feb 2014	Dean Course leaders Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Appointments made	Managing Director and Academic Principal	

About QAA

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

QAA's aims are to:

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

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

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

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/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 Infrastructure The core guidance developed and maintained by QAA in partnership with the UK higher education community and used by QAA and higher education providers until 2011-12 for quality assurance of UK higher education. It has since been replaced by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (**Quality Code**).

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 higher education providers for their courses and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standards**.

awarding body A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the **framework for higher education qualifications**, such as diplomas or degrees.

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

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 which formed the core element of the **Academic Infrastructure** (now superseded by the **Quality Code**).

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 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 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*.

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

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

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 study, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, resources, and specialist facilities (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.

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

programme 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 A UK degree-awarding body or any other organisation that offers courses of higher education 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').

Quality Code Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is being developed from 2011 to replace the **Academic Infrastructure** and will incorporate all its key elements along with additional topics and overarching themes.

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 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 qualifications frameworks and **subject benchmark statements**. See also **academic standards**.

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