QAA

Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

June 2009

Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education

SR31/2009

Preface

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education.

As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

Purpose of IQER

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

The IQER process

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

Developmental engagement

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

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college

- an optional written submission by the student body

- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit

- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days

- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education

- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

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

Summative review

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

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

Evidence

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

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents

- reviewing the optional written submission from students

- asking questions of relevant staff

- talking to students about their experiences.

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

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications

- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*

- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects

- *Guidelines for preparing programme specifications*, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study

- award benchmark statements, which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

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

Outcomes of IQER

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

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential, advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.

- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence, limited confidence** or **no confidence.** There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published.

Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

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

Executive summary

The Summative review of Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education carried out in June, 2009

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

Good practice

The team has identified the following good practice for dissemination.

- the process of developing the Institute's codes of practice, based on full consultation with staff and students and awarding bodies, ensures the parity of student experience across the Institute and for the securing of academic standards

- the Institute has introduced a systematic programme of thematic reviews of the higher education provision as an outcome of the Institute's effective integrated reporting structures, which lead to both dissemination of good practice and any necessary actions

- the Institute's developing process for the comprehensive observation of teaching and learning in its higher education programmes supports the enhancement of the quality of teaching and the dissemination of good practice

- the Institute has established a well-developed system of student support, which is congruent with the Institute's codes of practice, making use of both teaching staff, student mentors and specialist staff such as the study skills coordinator and resources

- there are well-designed systems to ensure that the student voice is both heard and acted on

- the commitment to continuing professional development, as exemplified by its annual staff development festival and its integration with the provision of its university partners, ensures that staff are well equipped for their higher education teaching

- the Institute's systematic process for the review of its public information ensures its accuracy and completeness

- the Institute's comprehensive provision of information by means of its up-to-date and accessible website demonstrates an admirable commitment to openness and transparency.

Recommendations

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

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

- continue to monitor its implementation and embedding of its codes of practice for its higher education provision across the institution

- review its library provision and its management of the stock, to ensure that appropriate resources are available to all students to meet their learning needs

- monitor and review the impact of its developing strategy for the publication of information both to staff, students and stakeholders and also the general public.

A Introduction and context

1   This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education (the Institute). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the Institute discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the Institute delivers on behalf of the Universities of Hull, Huddersfield, York St John, Leeds Metropolitan University and Edexcel. The review was carried out by Mr Graham Brotherton, Mr Gary Hargreaves, Mrs Trudy Stiles (reviewers) and Dr Daniel Lamont (coordinator).

2   The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the Institute and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the Institute and awarding bodies, meetings with staff and students and partner institutions and reports of reviews by QAA. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in Section C of this report. The review also considered the Institute's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)*, subject and award benchmark statements, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and programme specifications.

3   In order to assist HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the Foundation Degree programmes delivered at the Institute.

4   The Institute is a large general further education college. The majority of the higher education courses are delivered at the main Nuns Corner and Westward Ho campuses. The Institute has a significant and growing higher education provision. The Institute offers a full range of programmes from Foundation level to postgraduate level 7. In 2008-09, the Institute enrolled 3,247 full-time further education students and 10,211 part-time further education students. In higher education, the Institute enrolled 719 full-time and 854 part-time students, totalling 1,214 full-time equivalents. A total of 103 Institute staff teach on the higher education programmes, including 56 staff who have more than 70 per cent of their teaching timetable within the higher education provision.

5   The Institute actively develops programmes to meet local and regional needs. This often involves developing programmes for niche markets. The Institute is recognised as a centre of vocational excellence in a number of areas including media, plumbing, ports and logistics, food manufacturing and automotives. The Institute has recently achieved 'Academy' status in media and food manufacturing.

6   The Institute has a long tradition of providing higher education and the majority is funded directly. The Institute works with a range of awarding body higher education institutions. The Institute's preferred validation partner is the University of Hull and it develops provision in line with this University's expertise and experience. The HEFC-funded provision at the time of the review, together with the awarding bodies, comprised the following programmes:

University of Hull

- BA (Hons) Business Management
- BA (Hons) Business Management with Finance
- BA (Hons) Business Management with HRM
- BA (Hons) Business Management with Marketing
- BA (Hons) Business Management with Psychology
- BSc (Hons) Food Manufacturing Management (Top Up)
- BSc (Hons) Logistics Management (Top Up)
- BSc (Hons) Manufacturing Management (World-Class Systems) (Top Up)
- FdA Public Sector Management
- FdA Retail Management
- FdSc Environmental Technology Management (subject to validation)
- FdSc Logistics Management
- FdSc Managing Productivity: Improving Organisational Performance
- FdSc World Class Manufacturing
- MA Critical Approaches to International Media
- MA Professional Writing
- BA (Hons) Advertising and Promotion (Top Up)
- BA (Hons) Commercial Photography
- BA (Hons) Creative Music with Year 0
- BA (Hons) Design with Year 0
- BA (Hons) Fine and Applied Art with Year 0
- BA (Hons) Journalism
- BA (Hons) Multimedia Design and Animation
- BA (Hons) Performance Studies (Dance or Drama) with Year 0
- BA (Hons) Professional Writing
- BA (Hons) Television Production
- FdA Advertising and Promotion
- FdA Applied Digital Media (Broadcasting)
- FdA Applied Digital Media (Broadcast Journalism)
- FdA Press Photography

- BA (Hons) Tourism and Business Management

- FdA Tourism and Hospitality Business Management

- FdA Business and Event Management

- FdA Sport and Leisure Management

- FdSc Construction

- MA Children's Literature

- BA (Hons) Community Studies (Top Up)

- BA (Hons) Counselling Studies with Year 0

- BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (Top Up)

- BA (Hons) English Studies

- BA (Hons) Health and Social Care (Top Up)

- BA (Hons) Psychological Studies

- BA (Hons) Psychological Studies with Counselling

- FdA Children, Parenting and Communities

- FdA Criminological Studies (formerly Crime and Disorder)

- FdSc Mental Health Studies

- FdA Promoting Healthy Communities

- FdA Social Care (formerly Health and Social Care)

- FdA Sustainable Communities

- FdEd Early Childhood Studies

- FdSc Hospital and Health Care (Adults) with Year 0

- FdSc Housing Studies

- HE Diploma in Community and Youth Work

- Certificate in Social and Community Studies

- FdEd Learning Support (formerly Pre-16 Learning and Teaching Support)

Leeds Metropolitan University

- MSc Productivity and Innovation Development: Sustaining World-Class Performance

- BA (Hons) Business Management with English

- BSc (Hons) Productivity Management: Creating a World Class Organisation (Top Up)

- DipHE Law

- FdA Strategic Management

- FdSc Food Production Management

- FdSc Management for Logistics

- FdSc World Class Manufacturing Management

- BSc (Hons) Applied Computing with Multimedia Technologies (Top Up)

- BSc (Hons) Engineering Management (Top Up)

- FdSc Applied Computing with Multimedia Technologies

- FdSc Electrical and Electronic Engineering

- FdSc Engineering Design

- FdSc Mechanical Engineering

- FdSc Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineering

- FdA Airport and Airline Management

- FdSc Health Related Exercise and Fitness

- FdSc Sports Coaching (Performance and Participation)

- FdA Golf Management

- FdA Public Services Management

University of Lancaster

- BA (Hons) Digital Media Production: Journalism

- BA (Hons) Digital Media Production: Multimedia

- BA (Hons) Digital Media Production: Photography

- BA (Hons) Digital Media Production: TV, Film and Video

Sheffield Hallam University

- FdSc Food Manufacturing Management

- FdA Tourism and Hospitality Business Management

University of Huddersfield

- MBA Business Administration

- MSc Leadership and Management

- MA Professional Development

- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (Post-Compulsory Education and Training) (PCET)

- BA (Hons) Education and Training

- FdA Educational Administration

- Certificate in Education (PCET)

University of York St John

- FD Rehabilitation

Edexcel

- HNC Business

- HNC/D Engineering (Mechanical)

- HNC/D Engineering (Refrigeration and Air Conditioning)

- HNC/D Operations Engineering (Instrumentation and Control)

- HNC/D Engineering (Electrical/Electronic)

- HNC/D Construction

- HNC/D Animal Management

Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies

7   The Institute has formal partnership agreements with each of its higher education awarding bodies, as well as a standard agreement with Edexcel covering the Higher National awards. While the terms of the agreements vary in detail to reflect the nature of each, all are current, with the responsibilities of both partners clearly defined. Partnership arrangements with the universities are devolved with clear mechanisms in place for maintaining a rigorous oversight of the provision.

Recent developments in higher education at the Institute

8   The Institute has increased its higher education provision by 94 per cent in the last six years. Growth has been the result of new Foundation Degree programmes, new degrees and, more recently, the development of master's degrees. The Institute continues to attract additional student numbers and has ambitious plans to develop a major new University Centre in 2009-10. The new centre is being funded by HEFCE and the Regional Development Agency, and will underpin the aspirations of the Institute to further develop its higher education provision.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

9   Students studying on higher education programmes at the Institute were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team and they accepted this invitation. The submission was prepared by a diverse range of students who reviewed the submission for the Developmental engagement, which had involved the scrutiny of a range of documents, such as minutes of team meetings, the National Student Survey and annual course monitoring reports and they also interviewed the librarian and other students. The submission identified a number of issues that were useful to the team, and which were discussed in the meeting with students during the visit.

B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education

Core theme 1: Academic standards

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

10 Two significant elements in the Institute's management and delivery of academic standards are the Institute's own codes of practice and the associated Quality Handbook. The self-evaluation indicates that, since the Developmental engagement, the Institute has continued to discharge and to develop further its responsibilities for the governance of academic standards, especially by developing additional codes of practice. A key focus has been to develop further activities that better promote the management of the Institute's higher education provision both centrally and also across faculties. For example, the Partner Enhancement Report provides an overview of the Institute's University of Hull provision. While its intention is to encourage and disseminate good practice, the report also offers a critical perspective on a wide range of issues relating to academic standards, and leads to an action plan to address any issues identified.

11 The management reporting structure is clearly defined with monitoring and review procedures firmly embedded. In addition to informal meetings, programme teams meet formally twice each year, producing an action plan and minutes from analysis of module evaluations, external examiner reports, student feedback, staff development, data, resources issues and review the previous action plan. A third programme review meeting results in an annual monitoring report. On the basis of these reports, faculty deans produce a faculty self-evaluation document. This process provides an effective framework for both monitoring and also enhancing the higher education provision. The team found that there was a clear and effective structure and reporting system for the management of the higher education provision.

12 The Quality and Standards Committee performs a vital role in monitoring the higher education provision. On the basis of the faculty self-evaluation documents, external examiners reports and other key documents, it produces a quality enhancement report. As a result of this critical evaluation of all higher education, themes are identified for further development by a thematic review team that will include outside representation, and which produces a thematic review report. This may result in a new Institute code of practice, staff development or other action as appropriate. The quality and standards panel forwards the annual monitoring reports to the awarding body. The Quality Enhancement Report and any new code of practice is sent to both the higher education coordinators, and also the Higher Education Board of Studies for comment and review. The Higher Education Board of Studies reports to the governing body.

13 The use of the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*, together with the Institute's own codes of practice, establishes the framework for the effective management of the requirements of awarding bodies. For example, the quality of formative feedback across the board is scrutinised, to ensure parity of the student experience against the different regulatory frameworks. The Institute works closely with partner universities in implementing the *Code of practice* in such matters as the chairing and administering of examination boards. For example, staff attend annual planning events at Leeds

Metropolitan University. Programme and faculty reviews identify themes for development and identify areas of good practice.

14 External examiner reports are scrutinised at programme and institute level, where an overview is taken and an action plan is produced, in order to follow up their recommendations. For example, as a result of comments made by external examiners, the Quality and Standards Committee established a working group comprising Institute administrators, responsible for preparing documentation for all boards of examiners, to ensure the effective management of examination boards. The outcome, in March 2009, was an Institute code of practice entitled 'Board of Examiners: Administrative Conduct'. Variation in the administration of examination boards has been identified and, as a result, an academic registrar has been appointed, supported by specialist administrators, to assist the next phase of development.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

15 The Institute's codes of practice, which are referenced to benchmarks and appropriate awarding bodies, as well as to the *Code of practice*, provide strategy and context. While new codes have been developed since the Developmental engagement, the practice surrounding them is well established. Each code is developed following comprehensive discussion with higher education coordinators and dissemination of draft documentation across faculties. Hence, while practice is largely embedded within the Quality and Standards Handbook, the codes provide a valuable source of reference material for new and existing staff. The team found that their reading of the evidence supported the Institute's view that the codes are well established, understood by staff and set out an overall clear and transparent structure that establishes lines of responsibility for managing learning opportunities for higher education programmes.

16 The Institute's own codes of practice demonstrate that it takes full responsibility for assuring academic standards, by providing a definitive institutional context. It is clear that these codes have been well understood and received by staff. The team found that practices at programme level showed full compliance with the Institute's codes. For example, mitigating circumstances are presented in a clear format and have reduced variation in practice, while fulfilling the Institute's responsibility to comply with the procedures of all the awarding bodies. The Institute has a clear, rigorous and effective design process for its higher education courses, working closely with awarding bodies. Furthermore, in conjunction with the awarding body, there is a rigorous validation process. At each stage, systematic account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure.

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

17 Collaborative provision agreements and handbooks of the four awarding bodies clearly set out their requirements and the responsibilities which are delegated to the Institute. There is a good working relationship between the Institute and each of the awarding bodies, with frequent and regular formal and informal communication between the Institute and the awarding body liaison officers. For instance, a representative of the Leeds Metropolitan University Regional University Network visits the Institute monthly.

18   The University of Hull Collaborative Committee meets formally at least four times each year, attended by the Vice-Principal, Quality and Higher Education who chairs the Institute's Higher Education Board of Studies. The Director for Quality and Standards, who chairs the Quality and Standards Committee, meets the Vice-Principal weekly, in order to consider any emerging issues. At faculty level, the University of Hull's Joint Board of Studies collaborative meetings take place twice each year. The Institute's faculty deans and programme leaders and the University faculty leaders are participants.

19   The Director for Quality and Standards, the Vice-Principal, Quality and Higher Education, and the faculty deans also attend the University of Hull's Joint Development Board twice each year with the University's senior management team. Similar arrangements apply for collaboration with the other awarding bodies. These meetings ensure that the Institute is conforming in full to the requirements of its awarding bodies, and the dialogue with University colleagues helps to secure academic standards.

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

20   The Institute has an extensive and varied range of professional development, which includes a number of priorities that directly support academic standards. An essential element of new staff induction is an understanding of the Academic Infrastructure. Institute staff have the opportunity to participate in the awarding bodies' staff development events. The training of staff by awarding bodies addresses procedural and operational issues and ensures that the regulatory framework is followed and that the requirements of awarding bodies are met. The University of Hull and other partners also make available their programme of staff development to all Institute staff. The team found that the Institute's processes for staff development and training enabled it to achieve and secure appropriate academic standards.

21   The new observation of teaching and learning scheme, piloted this year, was well received by the staff who had been trained for the process. It is currently under review to improve further its effectiveness. Feedback from staff on the value and usefulness of the training was very positive. A key feature of this is to ensure that staff are teaching to the appropriate level of the FHEQ and understand the Academic Infrastructure.

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

Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities

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

22   The arrangements outlined in paragraphs 10 to 14 above are also effective in supporting the Institute's management of the quality of learning opportunities. Operational practices are informed and supported by the Quality and Standards Committee, itself supported by the Institute's Quality and Standards Department whose head, together with the Higher Education Manager for Quality Enhancement, has an oversight of all reports and identifies issues for consideration and cross-Institute themes where appropriate.

23 The devolved structure within the Institute gives significant responsibility through course teams and course leaders for programmes management. Course teams understand and implement their responsibilities for monitoring quality. In each faculty, there is a higher education coordinator who has oversight of the faculty's provision. All higher education coordinators meet regularly at the Higher Education Coordinators Committee. The team found that this structure was effective in the management of learning opportunities.

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

24 The reporting mechanisms for academic standards described in paragraphs 17 to 19 also apply to the quality of learning opportunities. The scrutiny of partnership agreements confirms that the Institute has substantial delegated responsibility for the delivery and quality assurance of learning opportunities. This confirmed the Developmental engagement report, which acknowledged the strong collaborative relationships and clear reporting mechanisms in place between the Institute and each awarding body. Both Institute staff and awarding bodies' representatives, including those in new partnerships, affirmed the continuing strength of these relationships, and the arrangements supporting them, across the large number of partnerships.

25 The Partner Quality Enhancement Report is used to further safeguard academic standards. For example, the Institute's code of practice on mitigating circumstances has provided greater clarity to both staff and students and, as a result, there have been more referrals of exceptional cases directly to awarding bodies for a decision. The Institutional Quality Enhancement Report captures the full range of provision across all awarding bodies and disseminates good practice, for example by acting on responses to external examiner reports.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

26 The Institute's own codes of practice and Quality and Standards Handbook which reflect the Academic Infrastructure, are published on the Institute's website, thus giving clear information to potential students and employers. In the design of these codes of practice the Institute has consulted staff, students and, where appropriate, employers and awarding bodies regulatory frameworks. This ensures that students are properly and fully informed about the learning objectives and outcomes for their programmes and what is expected of them. Compliance with the guidelines of the Academic Infrastructure ensures that students progress academically and intellectually. The implementation of the new codes has evolved by capturing 'existing practice and articulating the processes within the relevant Code', a development supported by partner universities.

27 All programmes are underpinned by approved programme specifications. The Higher National specifications are produced by Edexcel, while most others are produced by the course teams working to guidance published by the Institute. The specifications contain a section on teaching and learning, which is used by curriculum team leaders and course managers to inform schemes of work and the range of learning activities to be used on each course.

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

28   The Institute has published a clear and explicit Higher Education Strategy 2007-2011 where its well-developed Quality Assurance Framework is highlighted. Following the receipt of annual monitoring reports and faculty self-evaluation documents, an annual quality improvement plan is produced each year and progress is reported to the Higher Education Board of Studies and to the governing body. This commitment to effective teaching and learning is followed through at course level, where each team produces a strategy outlining its approach to teaching, learning and assessment.

29   The process for the observation of teaching and learning is well embedded, but has been under considerable development to support higher education programmes. As a result, the Institute has introduced criteria and processes for the observation of teaching and learning that are specific to higher education and have taken account of best practice in this area by consulting widely within the sector. Staff confirmed that this was considered a valuable area of personal development. The detailed and personalised feedback was welcomed and was also a means of spreading good practice across the Institute. It is a strength that staff are fully trained to participate in this process.

30   The Institute has appointed a teaching and learning quality officer whose role is to support teaching, for example by providing bespoke mentoring support for higher education staff. This officer moderates the analysis of teaching observation pro formas and analyses themes and trends arising from them. This process enables the Institute to ensure that teaching and learning are delivered at the appropriate level, and that learning and teaching strategies support the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

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

31   The self-evaluation asserts that good student support systems are in place and cites a range of evidence in support with a clear focus on the student and the 'learner voice'. The team found that there is a comprehensive range of student support mechanisms in place at both programme and institute levels, using teaching staff, specialist support staff and student mentors. The self-evaluation makes clear that student support arrangements provided by the Institute are monitored and evaluated as part of annual course reporting and through student feedback. There is a cross-institute student committee that provides an opportunity for students to raise issues and the review team found that action follows. An excellent example of this is in response to concerns expressed about study skills, which led to the appointment of a study-skills coordinator, one of whose first tasks has been to produce a comprehensive guide to referencing. This draws on best practice in the sector and followed consultation with staff, and collaboration with the Universities of Bradford and Huddersfield.

32   At curricular and course team levels, student support is focused around a clear and well-documented tutoring system, focusing on student progress that covers both academic and pastoral support. Students confirmed that they could clearly identify and distinguish between study-skills support, pastoral matters and academic support. There has been good progress made since the Developmental engagement. Formative feedback is now a requirement in all higher education programmes. The team noted that there is adherence to the Institute's Code of Practice on Assessment and the return of student work.
The Institute has implemented an action plan to ensure compliance and monitoring. Meetings with staff and students indicated that there was significant progress being made in returning assessed work on time.

33 The team found that feedback from student representation at faculty and programme meetings, together with student involvement in such matters as programme design, enhancement and pre-validation as student representatives, has resulted in several significant improvements in the student learning experience. To support the transparency and open relationship between staff and students, a HEFCE-funded student-led project on feedback to students has resulted in a good practice guide Assessment and Feedback: An Undergraduate Perspective. This gave rise to a number of recommendations, including promoting formative and summative assessment feedback which makes clear reference to module learning outcomes and assessment criteria, and that the Institute continues to make the best use of collecting student feedback...to ensure that the learner voice is continually heard. The team noted that these recommendations had been acted upon. The student written submission and discussions with students offer further positive evidence of the effectiveness of student support. Students are consistent in their appreciation of the support from individual staff.

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

34 The Institute's self-evaluation identifies a strong emphasis on staff development specific to higher education, differentiated to meet the needs of both new and existing staff. The team found ample evidence to support this. In addition to the regular weekly staff development activities, over the past three years, the Institute has held a weekly staff development festival during the February half-term. The festival spans three days and covers both essential training, such as updates to the codes of practice, examination board training, and enhancement activities such as developing innovative assessments. The Institute uses this as an opportunity, while all the staff are available, to share good practice. Examples of topics covered in 2009 are the production of an exemplary annual course monitoring report and sharing by the teacher training team of their good practice in terms of giving timely, constructive feedback. All the participants agree it is a valuable means of developing their competence in the important aspects of the Institute's higher education provision. The development of staff research and consultancy is encouraged to ensure that teaching is current and related to the needs and expectations of employers.

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

35 The Institute's Strategic Plan 2006-11 and the Higher Education Strategic Plan 2007-11 identify the importance of providing high-quality resources for learners and staff. The sufficiency of learning resources, both human and physical, is systematically considered at course validation and through the Institute's internal approval process. University awarding bodies check the qualifications and experience of designated teaching staff at validation and subsequently when new appointments are made. A scrutiny of staff records supports the results of internal Institute self-audits, which show that staff are qualified and well trained for teaching on the higher education courses.

36 Physical resources are routinely considered in annual monitoring and curriculum area self-evaluations. This evidence indicates that higher education book stocks in the Institute learning resource centre vary significantly between areas. The team learned that there were varying practices about the retention of older texts, in order to make space for new purchases. Concern was expressed by some students that higher education book stocks in the Institute's learning resource centre varied significantly between areas. Library staff

offered reassurance that mechanisms are in place to address shortcomings when they are identified. Higher education students at the Institute have access to the library at the University of Hull and borrowing rights as external users. The Institute's Learning Curve Team provides a wide range of support both directly and also through the training of staff virtual learning environment champions, including the trialling and review of software.

37 The review revealed further evidence to support the evaluation made in the Developmental engagement that there is high-quality use of the Institute's virtual learning environment. For example, the ability to search library catalogues and to obtain copies of journal articles through web portals was widely welcomed by students. There are also extensive study-skills materials available to students, especially those produced in collaboration with the partner universities, which draws on sector good practice.

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

Core theme 3: Public information

What information is the Institute responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?

38 The self-evaluation reports that, since the Developmental engagement, the Institute has formalised its approach to monitoring public information to ensure completeness and accuracy. There is ample evidence to support this. The Institute works closely with its awarding bodies and, in conjunction with them, publishes relevant information. This includes the prospectus, course and module handbooks and codes of practice that interpret the academic regulations of the awarding bodies in institutionally specific ways. The Institute has made use of the University of Hull template for programme handbooks, as well as considering the handbooks of other partner universities in developing its own template as part of its commitment to providing enhanced information to students. For some master's programmes, which operate on a franchise basis, the Institute uses handbooks that are produced by the franchising university.

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

39 The Institute recognises some historical variation in the presentation and depth of public information. A process of thematic review of public information, which was introduced in 2008 and has continued into the current academic year, provides for detailed scrutiny of course information in all forms. In addition, a new code of practice on the accuracy and completeness of public information is currently being introduced. This sets out clearly the Institute's approach to the development, monitoring and review of public information and includes clear timescales and levels of responsibility.

40 The Institute has a robust system for the production of the prospectus based on a close working partnership between the marketing and quality and standards departments. At each stage, it is carefully checked for accuracy and completeness. Thus it becomes a key driver and pivotal document in the Institute's provision of information. From it, information is drawn for documents such as programme handbooks. The team were impressed by the thoroughness of this process, which was reflected in complete and accessible programme handbooks.

41   There is a detailed standard template, comprising both generic sections and sections specific to programmes for the production of programme and module handbooks. Programme handbooks for the Foundation Degrees in Housing Studies, Retail Management, Social Care, Mental Health Studies and the HNC Construction were seen by the team and comply with the template. They are student-friendly and appropriate, and provide a clear overview of the programme structure, learning and teaching methods, support arrangements and relevant academic regulations in a standardised way. The students met by the team confirmed that handbooks were made available at the start of their programme. They confirmed that handbooks gave a clear picture of expectations through detailed learning outcomes at a module and session level and clear assignment guidance, as well as specific suggestions for reading. Staff felt the introduction of an easily accessible template, supported by specific training had led to the production of consistent and clear handbooks. Where work-based learning is involved, there is a process for ensuring that staff are fully briefed with appropriate information about their role in supervising students.

42   The information available to students through the Institute's virtual learning environment platform is detailed and helpful, with extensive resources apparent in the modules available to the team. This includes handbooks, handouts, and other teaching and learning resources, together with well-maintained links to external sources. There is also generic study-skills information. Part-time students made clear that they found the virtual learning environment particularly helpful. The website contains a range of information to support students, both during the application process and during their studies. All of the Institute's codes of practice for higher education are therefore available to students, potential students, and other interested parties in an open and transparent way. There is a process for regularly reviewing the currency of this information. Students also commented on the effective use of notice boards, such as for the graduate mentor and study-skills adviser, to promote access to student support.

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

C   Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment

43   The Developmental engagement in assessment was conducted in October 2008. It was structured around the following lines of enquiry agreed with the Institute:

- Does the Institute's approach to the development of new programmes provide assurance that assessment strategies, policies and practices ensure that the standard for each award is set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is properly judged against this?

- Does the Institute's approach to providing feedback on student's assessed work promote student learning and academic development ,and are there ways in which the operation of the assessment regime contributes to the design and review of programmes of study?

- Does the Institute effectively publicise its assessment principles and procedures for, and processes of, assessment in ways that are explicit, valid and reliable?

44   The Developmental engagement team found evidence of much good practice in the frameworks for the quality assurance of assessment. These include commitment to developing a code of practice adopted for the Institute's higher education work, which embeds the *Code of practice,* published by QAA, the development of a strong student voice and engagement in feedback on their assessment experiences. The universal use of a standard pro forma for assessment to ensure comprehensive and constructive feedback and the design of module handbooks, in order to ensure that students understand the relationship between learning outcomes and assessment, ensures that students are well supported in undertaking assessment tasks. In addition, the Institute has introduced a system for the early diagnosis of learning support needs at the points of admission and provides a wide range of widening participation strategies, especially the introduction of level 0 courses to support students in completing assessments.

45   The Developmental engagement team made a number of recommendations, including the advisability of continuing the good work being undertaken devising and implementing the Institute's code of practice and the updating of its Quality Handbook. There were a number of desirable recommendations, which included the further development of the current mechanisms for the dissemination of best practice in assessment across the Institute, encouraging the more widespread use of formative assessment and its associated feedback to support student learning, and ensuring that the best practice seen in supporting students completing assessment tasks is widely used.

D Foundation Degrees

46   The Foundation Degree curricula in the Institute reflect the general strengths that have already been identified and take close account of the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. Strengths include close and collaborative relationships with employers, high-quality student support and the incorporation of skills development in programmes.

47   Foundation Degrees provide enhancement opportunities for students to extend work-based learning and to see the relevance of linking this to theory. Good relations with employers included their involvement in curricular design and in contributing to assessment. For example, the FdSc Housing Studies, which was proposed by North East Lincolnshire Council, includes other stakeholders, such as employers who contribute placements, give guest lectures, attend monitoring and review events, and sit on the course board. Moreover, the course is accredited by the Chartered Institute of Housing. Similarly, the FdA Press Photography has also developed links with industry, including the Press Association. The FdA Mental Health Studies makes use of healthcare sector practitioners for advice and guest lectures, and this ensures that the course has currency.

48   The Institute offers the following Foundation Degree programmes, validated by the following institutions:

University of Hull

- FdA Public Sector Management

- FdA Retail Management

- FdSc Environmental Technology Management (subject to validation)

- FdSc Logistics Management

- FdSc Managing Productivity: Improving Organisational Performance

- FdSc World Class Manufacturing

- FdA Advertising and Promotion

- FdA Applied Digital Media (Broadcasting)

- FdA Applied Digital Media (Broadcast Journalism)

- FdA Press Photography

- FdA Tourism and Hospitality Business Management

- FdA Business and Event Management

- FdA Sport and Leisure Management

- FdSc Construction

- FdA Children, Parenting and Communities

- FdA Criminological Studies (formerly Crime and Disorder)

- FdSc Mental Health Studies

- FdA Promoting Healthy Communities

- FdA Social Care (formerly Health and Social Care)

- FdA Sustainable Communities

- FdEd Early Childhood Studies

- FdSc Hospital and Health Care (Adults) with Year 0

- FdA Housing Studies

- FdEd Learning Support (formerly Pre-16 Learning and Teaching Support)

Leeds Metropolitan University

- FdA Strategic Management

- FdSc Food Production Management

- FdSc Management for Logistics

- FdSc World Class Manufacturing Management

- FdSc Applied Computing with Multimedia Technologies

- FdSc Electrical and Electronic Engineering

- FdSc Engineering Design

- FdSc Mechanical Engineering

- FdSc Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineering

- FdA Airport and Airline Management

- FdSc Health Related Exercise and Fitness

- FdSc Sports Coaching (Performance and Participation)

Sheffield Hallam University

- FdSc Food Manufacturing Management

- FdA Tourism and Hospitality Business Management

University of Huddersfield

- FdA Educational Administration

University of York St John

- FD Rehabilitation.

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

- the process of developing the Institute's codes of practice based on full consultation with staff and students and awarding bodies ensures the parity of student experience across the Institute, and for the securing of academic standards (paragraphs 10, 13, 16)

- the Institute has introduced a systematic programme of thematic reviews of the higher education provision as an outcome of the Institute's effective integrated reporting structures, which lead to both dissemination of good practice and any necessary actions (paragraph 12)

- the Institute's developing process for the comprehensive observation of teaching and learning in its higher education programmes supports the enhancement of the quality of teaching and the dissemination of good practice (paragraph 21)

- the Institute has established a well-developed system of student support that is congruent with the Institute's codes of practice, making use of teaching staff, student mentors and specialist staff such as the study-skills coordinator and resources (paragraphs 31, 32)

- there are well-designed systems to ensure that the student voice is both heard and acted on (paragraph 33)

- the commitment to continuing professional development, as exemplified by its annual staff development festival and its integration with the provision of its university partners, ensures that staff are well equipped for their higher education teaching (paragraph 34)

- the Institute's systematic process for the review of its public information ensures its accuracy and completeness (paragraphs 39, 40)

- the Institute's comprehensive provision of information by means of its up-to-date and accessible website demonstrates an admirable commitment to openness and transparency (paragraph 42).

50 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the Institute and its awarding bodies.

The team also agreed the following areas where it would be **desirable** for the Institute to take action:

- to continue to monitor its implementation and embedding of its codes of practice for its higher education provision across the institution (paragraphs 10, 13, 16)

- to review its library provision and its management of the stock to ensure that appropriate resources are available to all students to meet their learning needs (paragraph 36)

- to monitor and review the impact of its developing strategy for the publication of information both to staff, students and stakeholders and also the general public (paragraph 39).

E Conclusions and summary of judgements

51 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in the Institute's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the Institute offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the Institute and its awarding bodies, the University of Hull, the University of Huddersfield, the University of Lancaster, Leeds Metropolitan University, Sheffield Hallam University, York St John University and Edexcel.

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

- the process of developing the Institute's codes of practice based on full consultation with staff and students and awarding bodies ensures the parity of student experience across the Institute, and for the securing of academic standards (paragraphs 10, 13, 16)

- the Institute has introduced a systematic programme of thematic reviews of the higher education provision as an outcome of the Institute's effective integrated reporting structures, which lead to both dissemination of good practice and any necessary actions (paragraph 12)

- the Institute's developing process for the comprehensive observation of teaching and learning in its higher education programmes supports the enhancement of the quality of teaching and the dissemination of good practice (paragraph 21)

- the Institute has established a well-developed system of student support that is congruent with the Institute's codes of practice, making use of teaching staff, student mentors and specialist staff such as the study-skills coordinator and resources (paragraphs 31, 32)

- there are well-designed systems to ensure that the student voice is both heard and acted on (paragraph 33)

- the commitment to continuing professional development, as exemplified by its annual staff development festival and its integration with the provision of its university partners, ensures that staff are well equipped for their higher education teaching (paragraph 34)

- the Institute's systematic process for the review of its public information ensures its accuracy and completeness (paragraphs 39, 40)

- the Institute's comprehensive provision of information by means of its up-to-date and accessible website demonstrates an admirable commitment to openness and transparency (paragraph 42).

53 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the Institute and its awarding bodies.

The team also agreed the following areas where it would be **desirable** for the Institute to take action:

- continue to monitor its implementation and embedding of its codes of practice for its higher education provision across the institution (paragraphs 10, 13, 16)

- review its library provision and its management of the stock to ensure that appropriate resources are available to all students to meet their learning needs (paragraph 36)

- monitor and review the impact of its developing strategy for the publication of information both to staff, students and stakeholders and also the general public (paragraph 39).

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

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

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

Grimsby Institute's action plan relating to the Summative review: July 2009					
Good practice	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the Institute:					
• the process of developing the Institute's codes of practice based on full consultation with staff and students and awarding bodies ensures the parity of student experience across the Institute and for the securing of academic standards (paragraphs 10, 13, 16)	Continue to develop relevant Codes of Practice in consultation with staff, students and awarding bodies which reflect and embed the Academic infrastructure	Ongoing	Director of HE Quality and Standards	Expanding number of Codes of Practice on HE Quality website	HE Board of Studies	Progress on the development of the codes of practice is monitored by the Vice Principal (HE) and the HE Board of Studies

Grimsby Institute's action plan relating to the Summative review: July 2009						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
● the Institute has introduced a systematic programme of thematic reviews of the higher education provision as an outcome of the Institute's effective integrated reporting structures which lead to both dissemination of good practice and any necessary actions (paragraph 12)	Continue to develop the good practice and publish the annual calendar with the areas for review plus the dissemination action plan	Beginning of each academic year produce calendar	Vice Principal/ Director of HE Quality and Standards	Ongoing annual calendar to include the review of work based learning and PPD files in 09/10 (and the number of thematic reviews will be achieved per academic year or as appropriate)	HE Board of Studies plus the Corporation Curriculum and Quality Committee	Annual calendar reviewed periodically throughout the year to monitor progress of the thematic reviews
● the Institute's developing process for the comprehensive observation of teaching and learning in its higher education programmes supports the enhancement of the quality of teaching and the dissemination of good practice (paragraph 21)	Continued commitment to the dedicated post which facilitates the ongoing development and training	August 2010	Vice Principal	Permanent post secured. Training schedule/action plan produced and schedule of observation completed	HE Board of Studies	Progress on the implementation of teaching/ learning observation monitoring by the Director of Quality (HE) Deans and Vice Principal

Grimsby Institute's action plan relating to the Summative review: July 2009

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• the Institute has established a well-developed system of student support, making use of teaching staff, student mentors and specialist staff such as the study-skills coordinator and resources which is congruent with the Institute's Codes of practice (paragraphs 31, 32)	Continue to grow the team in line with the Institute's growth to ensure continuation of the good provision	Annual review via Quality Enhancement Reports	Vice Principal/ Director of HE Quality and Standards	The team responsible for coordinating student support is increased according to the growth in the Institution's provision and continues the well developed and coordinated system of student support	HE Board of Studies	Student feedback Partner Institutions feedback
• there are well-designed systems to ensure that the student voice is both heard and acted on (paragraph 33)	Continue with committee structure and review effectiveness annually	Annual review at end of year	HE Steering Group	Committee structure provides sufficient mechanisms for students to provide feedback	HE Board of Studies	Student feedback survey

Grimsby Institute's action plan relating to the Summative review: July 2009

Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• the commitment to continuing professional development, as exemplified by its annual staff development festival and its integration with the provision of its university partners, ensures that staff are well equipped for their higher education teaching (paragraph 34)	Continuation of existing practices and a commitment by senior team to enhance further	Annual review	Vice Principal Director of HE Quality and Standards	Increased availability and uptake of training activities	Staff Development Strategy Group	Monitor uptake of training activities through staff development committee and CPD logs
• the Institute's systematic process for the review of its public information ensures its accuracy and completeness (paragraphs 39, 40)	Annual review of accuracy and completeness of all key documents	Annual review	Director of Marketing and Communication in liaison with the HE Quality department	Accuracy of published information	HE Board of Studies	Annual review and/or student feedback
• the Institute's comprehensive provision of information by means of its up-to-date and accessible website demonstrates an admirable commitment to openness and transparency (paragraph 42).	Ongoing development of the website to allow public access to all key documentation	Ongoing	Director of Marketing and Communications and Director of HE Quality and Standards	Well developed website with high usage data	HE Board of Studies	Periodic review of the website Student and/or staff feedback

Grimsby Institute's action plan relating to the Summative review: July 2009

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed the following areas where it would be **desired** to take action:						
● to continue to monitor its implementation and embedding of its codes of practice for its higher education provision across the institution (paragraphs 10, 13 and 16)	Complete the remaining Codes of Practice within the scheduled time	As per plan	Director of HE Quality and Standards HE coordinators	Increased number of current, relevant Codes of Practice	HE Board of Studies	Monitor the progress of the development of the new codes to ensure the schedule is completed on time
● to review its library provision and its management of the stock to ensure that appropriate resources are available to all students to meet their learning needs (paragraph 36)	Full review planned in 09/10 which will include analysis of the stock plus the views of all stakeholders	June 10	HE Quality Team	Increased levels of satisfaction	HE Board of Studies	Analysis of spend. Staff/student satisfaction

Grimsby Institute's action plan relating to the Summative review: July 2009

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
• to monitor and review the impact of its developing strategy for the publication of information both to staff, students and stakeholders and also the general public (paragraph 39).	Annual monitoring via the self assessment process, plus discussion and associated action at the relevant committees	June 10	Director of Marketing and Communications Deans of Faculty Vice Principal	Positive analysis of the feedback Increased hits on the website	HE Board of Studies	Feedback from all stakeholders.