



**QAA**

# **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

## **Summative review**

April 2010

The College of West Anglia

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## **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 The College of West Anglia carried out in April 2010

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College'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 College'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 completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

### Good practice

The team has identified the following good practice for dissemination:

- the comprehensive nature and scope of the links between the College and the University enables, at a strategic and operational level, the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the provision and collaborative developments, such as the joint validation and delivery of Foundation Degrees
- the use made by the teacher education and early years programmes of the virtual learning environment, including discussion boards, feedback from student review meetings and assessment feedback, enables effective remote interaction of staff and students to support learning
- the variety and extent of staff development supports the advanced professional development of staff, which contributes significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of the higher education ethos and quality of the provision.

### 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 College to:

- review its systems and procedures to ensure the systematic reporting, analysis and review of trends in cohort retention, progression and achievement data across the programmes
- review the annual monitoring reports and action plans to ensure their rigorous completion in order to support quality improvement
- review and implement student feedback mechanisms to obtain more comprehensive data on programme-specific experience.

## 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 The College of West Anglia (the College). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College 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 College delivers on behalf of Anglia Ruskin University and Edexcel. The review was carried out by Mr Chris Davies, Mrs Catherine Fairhurst and Mr David Fallows (reviewers), and Mrs Monica Owen (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College 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 College and awarding bodies, meetings with staff, students, partner institutions, reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. 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 College'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 College.

4 The College is a large general further education college based in West Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. The College has four main campuses, one in King's Lynn, one in Cambridge and two in Wisbech. In 2006, the College of West Anglia merged with Isle College Wisbech to form one of the largest further education colleges in the eastern region. The College's catchment area is characterised by a low skills base within the workforce and low progression to higher education. The College's vision is to be the 'First choice for learning and skills in the region' and part of the College's strategic plan is to increase higher education recruitment and encourage internal progression to higher education. The College was graded as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in 2007 and awarded Beacon status in 2008.

5 The College has approximately 11,700 students of whom 433 (363 full-time equivalent students) are enrolled on higher education programmes. Of these, there are 293 full-time and 140 part-time students enrolled on the programmes, who are taught by 52 full-time and part-time staff (39.9 full-time equivalent staff). The College's higher education provision is taught across four of five faculties: Creative Arts; Business, Humanities, Science and Computing; Active Leisure, Landbased, Public and Caring Services; and Technology. The majority of the programmes are delivered at the King's Lynn Campus, with graphic design delivered at Wisbech and the teacher education programme delivered at Wisbech and King's Lynn. The FD Equine Studies is delivered at the Cambridge Campus.

6 The College offers the following programmes with the full-time equivalent student numbers in brackets.



### **Validated by Edexcel**

- HND Civil Engineering (28)
- HNC Construction (10.5)
- HNC Electrical/Electronic Engineering (11)

### **Validated by Anglia Ruskin University**

- BA (Hons) Fine Art (32)
- BA (Hons) Business Management (24)
- BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (top-up) (14)
- BSc (Hons) Computer Science (34)
- BA (Hons) Education (Post Compulsory Education and Training) (5)
- BA (Hons) History and English (28.5)
- BA (Hons) History and Sociology (11)
- BA (Hons) Psychosocial Studies (68)
- BA (Hons) Sociology and English (14)
- FdA Early Years, Childcare and Education (20)
- FdSc Equine Studies (9)
- DipHE Business Management (1.5)
- DipHE Graphic Design (13)
- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (25.5)
- HNC Business Management (7.5)
- HNC Engineering Year 2 only (6.5).

### **Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies**

7 The College has delivered programmes validated by Anglia Ruskin University (the University) since 1993 and in May 2007 entered into an agreement with the University to establish a joint venture company and create The University Centre King's Lynn. As part of the agreement a cross-college manager is responsible for coordinating the development and coordination of higher education. The partnership agreement with the University clearly lays out the responsibilities of the College and the University and the governance and financial arrangements of the partnerships. The College is an Edexcel approved centre and delivers its Edexcel Higher National Awards in line with Edexcel requirements. The College has a strategic aim to strengthen the University Partnership with the development of new Foundation Degrees.

## **Recent developments in higher education at the College**

8 Plans to replace the current King's Lynn and Wisbech Campus buildings with new Campuses by 2012 have been abandoned due to the lack of funding from the Learning and Skills Council. The College is working with the University to plan a University Centre in King's Lynn, funded through HEFCE's University Challenge programme. A new building has been opened in September 2009 at the College's Cambridge campus, with new facilities for the FD Equine Studies provided through a grant from the University. The FD Equine Studies, the only new programme, recruited students in 2009-10. The University has restricted future recruitment to the 2008-09 student numbers, apart from the FD Equine Studies. The College underwent an academic restructuring in 2008-09 with the number of faculties reduced from eight to five.

## **Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission**

9 Students on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team and a submission was made. The College's higher education support team briefed the students and produced a student questionnaire. Student representatives distributed the questionnaire to the students and the support team collated the data. Class representatives then met with the support team to produce a draft report. The class representatives amended the draft report before the production of the final student submission. No member of the academic staff was involved in this process and the team considered the submission rigorous and helpful in highlighting issues and good practice for further enquiry. The team also met students during the review 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 The Manager of the University Centre King's Lynn, line managed by the Executive Director Curriculum and Learning, has cross-college responsibility for coordinating and encouraging the development of higher education provision. She is the Executive Officer of the joint venture company and reports to both its board and the College's senior management team. The Manager acts as the main link between the College and its awarding bodies and attends a number of key University committees. The Manager also works closely with staff at all levels to ensure the overall standard of the provision. The full-time role of the Manager of the University Centre reflects the commitment of the College to the effective management of its higher education programmes and is a strength of the provision.

11 Heads of faculty, line managed by the Executive Director Curriculum and Learning, and the Head of Department of Organisational Development and Quality, who manages the teacher education programmes, are responsible for overseeing academic standards. Programme managers manage curriculum areas within which course directors are responsible for the day-to-day operational management of courses. The responsibilities for managing academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities are clear.

12 The College's programmes validated by the University are fully integrated into the University's systems to maintain academic standards and promote consistency of learning opportunities. The Edexcel programmes are subject to external verification by the Edexcel external examiners. College staff attend the University departmental assessment panels, the University faculty boards and discipline network groups. At these groups colleagues from the University and regional partners meet to share good practice and engage in discussions related to teaching and learning and improving the curriculum. The formal and informal communications between the two organisations are open and effective and lead to changes to maintain standards and enhance the student learning experience. The comprehensive nature and scope of the links between the College and the University enables, at a strategic and operational level, the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the provision and collaborative developments, such as the joint validation and delivery of Foundation Degrees. This is good practice.

13 As part of the Developmental engagement action plan, the College's Higher Education Monitoring Procedure has been revised. The higher education programmes now have a separate focus at the College's Curriculum Standards Committee. At these meetings the relevant faculty heads, with senior managers, including the Manager, University Centre, review the performance of programmes and identify appropriate actions to be taken. Both this committee and the Performance Review and Quality Committee, a subcommittee of the Corporation, monitor student performance. A recent college evaluation confirmed that this committee structure now provides clarity and transparency for the effective oversight of the College higher education provision. The team agrees with this view.

14 Annual monitoring and end of semester reports inform the Curriculum Standards Committee meetings. The Committee also considers student data against benchmarks. Benchmarking at module level takes place across the University partnership and there is some benchmarking at programme level. Student performance data and trends are reviewed at line management meetings. However, it is less clear where student retention, progression and achievement trends are systematically reviewed and discussed across the higher education programmes. It is desirable that the College reviews its systems and procedures to ensure the systematic reporting, analysis and review of trends in cohort retention, progression and achievement data across the programmes.

15 The Higher Education Steering Group is the internal mechanism by which the College coordinates its higher education programmes and reports to the senior management team and the joint venture company board. The Group acts as a focus for discussion and the dissemination of information. Since the Developmental engagement and revision to the higher education monitoring procedure, the identification of good practice has been included as a standard agenda item. Staff provided a number of examples where the good practice identified by the Developmental engagement team has been shared at the Steering Group and the programme teams have reviewed their practice. The team confirms that the reporting arrangements are effective for the management of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.

#### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

16 The University procedures and documentation, such as pathway specifications and module definition forms, are set within the context of the Academic Infrastructure. College staff are involved in the University periodic review and programme approvals and validations processes, in line with the *Code of practice, Section 7: Programme design, approval, monitoring and review*. There is clear evidence in the recent FD Equine Studies

validation documents of reference to the Academic Infrastructure and alignment with the FHEQ and the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. A staff development programme has been put in place since the Developmental engagement to improve understanding of the Academic Infrastructure. This has included activities run by the University. The Edexcel external examiner for Construction and Civil Engineering in 2009 commented that staff are aware of the Academic Infrastructure.

17 Since the Developmental engagement the College has developed a higher education strategy in which it is recognised that all faculties need to develop stronger employer links. This has been reinforced by the development of an employer engagement strategy. Staff were able to provide numerous examples of employer links, and the joint development and delivery with the University of the FD Equine Studies is based on working with new national employers. The programmes are aligned to the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*.

**How does the College 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?**

18 The College requires programme leaders to produce written annual monitoring reports and interim reports at the end of each semester. External examiners' comments from the departmental assessment panels are discussed. Student feedback is also used, although there is little evidence of feedback from employers. An action plan and an update on the previous year's action plan are produced. The recent review of the revised College higher education annual monitoring procedures commented that in some cases the completion of annual monitoring reports was inconsistent. The team found that, while annual monitoring was generally robust, the annual monitoring reports and action plans varied considerably in detail, including employer input. It is desirable that the College review the annual monitoring reports and action plans to ensure their rigorous completion in order to support quality improvement.

19 Programme teams carry out marking and moderation according to the University's Code of Practice on the Assessment of Students. The College Handbook for the Quality Assurance of Assessment details the internal verification procedures. The external examiner reports confirm that effective cross-college moderation takes place. The Edexcel external examiner report for HNC Construction and HND Civil Engineering in 2009 commented on the robust internal verification and procedures. However, the Edexcel external examiner for the new HNC Electrical/Electronic Engineering noted that internal verification was not in place at the start of the programme. The annual monitoring action plan shows this is now rectified.

20 External examiners appointed by the University carry out external monitoring, including the sampling of student work across the partnership. They take an overall view that academic standards are appropriate. Several comment directly on the College student work and report positively about student feedback to students.

21 External examiners monitor the Edexcel programmes, and the Principal and the College's Quality Unit receive their reports. If the reports contain any issues that could put standards at risk, the programme team is required to submit an action plan which is monitored by the Quality Unit. In the case of the HNC Electrical/Electronic Engineering the Quality Unit failed to receive the 2009 report. Procedures now ensure all reports are dealt with in a timely fashion. Heads of faculty consider the Edexcel external examiner reports and initiate any action required. External examiners have a substantial role in the maintenance and enhancement of academic standards, in line with the *Code of practice*,

*Section 4: External examining.* The Edexcel Construction and Civil Engineering external examiners' reports offer many favourable comments on the quality of students' work.

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

22 The College's higher education strategy makes a strong commitment to staff development to support academic standards. The College is working with the University to develop a joint statement on staff development expectations. The current draft reflects current practice and provides a good basis for continuing staff development activity.

23 All faculty heads have a devolved training budget and both these and a central budget are used for training days and directed planning days. The college strategy entitles all staff to five days of individual staff development. Staff development records show a number of staff attending conferences, involved in research, writing books, editing magazines as well as developing the curriculum through the discipline network groups. One member of staff has a sabbatical term funded by the University to complete a book. Staff can bid for earmarked funding to gain higher qualifications. In the current year, five staff are being supported to gain further qualifications, including two at doctorate level. Other staff are studying individual higher level modules or professional courses, in order to update themselves and develop and improve the curriculum. Staff confirmed the range of opportunities and support available.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College'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?**

24 Line management responsibility and reporting arrangements for the quality of learning opportunities are detailed in paragraphs 10 to 15. Course directors' roles and responsibilities are clearly laid out in the College higher education monitoring procedure with respect to the delivery and development of high-quality learning opportunities.

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

25 The process by which the College assures itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to awarding bodies are detailed in paragraphs 18 to 21. Pathway committees have a key responsibility in producing and agreeing the annual monitoring report, taking into account the issues raised by students and other stakeholders.

### **What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?**

26 The College has considered the *Code of practice* in the development of its policies and procedures. For example, the College's admission procedures are aligned with the *Code of practice, Section 10: Admissions to higher education*. Careers guidance and information reflects the *Code of practice, Section 8: Career education, information, advice and guidance*. Staff also develop their understanding through discipline networks meetings and other University events and clearly understood the use of the Academic Infrastructure.

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

27 The self-evaluation states that robust monitoring systems are in place to ensure that teaching and learning are of a high standard. These include the systems for monitoring teaching performance through individual staff appraisal and annual teaching observations. These are conducted by the members of the College teaching observation team every three years, and in other years by the appropriate head of faculty or qualified representative. Staff also confirmed that informal cross-campus visits take place for the observation of teaching when modules are new.

28 There is a draft College learning and teaching strategy. Examples of how the staff differentiate higher education from further education teaching and learning include negotiated, reflective and independent learning. The quality of teaching and learning is also enhanced by links with employers through student trips, external speakers, live briefs, and work-based learning during employment or placements. The teacher education and early years programmes use the virtual learning environment for discussion boards, feedback from student review meetings and assessment feedback; as well as providing copies of handbooks, summaries of external examiners comments and other information. This use of the virtual learning environment, which enables effective remote interaction of staff and students to support learning is good practice.

29 A variety of methods, both formal and informal, is used to obtain student feedback. The students confirmed that small class sizes enable issues to be raised directly with personal tutors or course directors and are often resolved in a timely fashion. Formal feedback is obtained from student representatives and individual students on University programmes through module evaluation. The results from module evaluations are indicated in module guides the following year. The Edexcel programmes rely on the external examiner to provide student feedback on modules.

30 Each programme also holds a student review meeting and recently the College has piloted a focus group of student representatives on the higher education steering group to collect qualitative data more effectively. Further focus groups and a higher education questionnaire are being introduced to obtain information of the student experience on their programmes. While the College has made progress in formalising feedback arrangements since the Developmental engagement, these approaches do not provide comprehensive student evaluation of each programme. Although students stated there was no difficulty in getting their voice heard, it is desirable to review and implement student feedback mechanisms to obtain more comprehensive data on programme-specific experience. Overall, the team concludes that there are effective College systems to maintain and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.



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

31 The main focus of student support is the tutorial system and all students have a personal tutor, often the course director, allocated to them at the beginning of the academic year. The tutorial provision is either timetabled on most courses or personal tutors are available by appointment at other times. The Developmental engagement established that high levels of academic support were available to students in respect of assessment and the students confirmed this. On the Foundation Degrees and the teacher education programme, mentors visit and provide effective support in the workplace.

32 There are two dedicated higher education student support coordinators who deal with issues such as UCAS applications admissions and financial support. One member of the team acts as a Student Adviser, required by the University regulations. Only the Student Adviser, or a designated staff member, is able to grant extensions to assessment deadlines and provide advice on mitigating circumstances. This role is highly valued by both staff and students.

33 There are clear policies and practices for the support of admissions and support for students with disabilities, clearly aligned to the *Code of practice, Section 3: Disabled students*. There is a range of central support services such as counselling and careers, externally accredited by the matrix Standard. A programme of careers advice sessions is being introduced which students can access online, or they can attend the University careers service. All these services are monitored effectively through annual monitoring, student feedback and the management and committee structure.

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

34 The Manager of the University Centre devises, in addition to other staff development, an annual cross-college programme to support higher education staff in collaboration with the Staff Development Unit. Individual staff needs are identified through appraisal, teaching observations and monitoring processes. In addition to any internal activities, staff engage with colleagues across the region through the discipline network groups and also have access to other University staff development events.

35 The College is an 'Investor in People' accredited institution and all staff are registered with the Institute for Learning. The College has put in place mechanisms whereby experienced tutors mentor and support new programme teams or new team members. A member of the teacher education team is currently supporting the equine studies team.

36 Outcomes from staff development are discussed at the higher education steering group for wider dissemination. Staff provided numerous examples of how staff development has enhanced the quality of teaching and learning through improved feedback to students, and adjustments to module delivery. On the teacher education programme there are new approaches to the reporting of teaching observations and modules on the computing programme have been updated. The variety and extent of staff development supports the advanced professional development of staff, which contributes significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of the higher education ethos and quality of the provision, and is good practice.

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

37 Heads of faculty are responsible for resourcing the programmes through the College budgetary process, and programme teams are required to show at the time of programme approval that resources are adequate for the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. External funding is sought for new programme development. The University has provided significant funding for the development of the FD Equine Studies and the proposed FD Veterinary Nursing.

38 Students and staff have access to the University's virtual learning environment and library. The College's learning resource centres, within the faculty budgets allocated, coordinate the purchase of books and other media following recommendations from programme teams. The Manager of the learning resource centres has partnership library meetings to ensure consistency of resource. The University and the College are introducing e-books. Although the students at Milton were very satisfied, students indicated that there is a need to improve book stocks at King's Lynn. The Manager of the University Centre monitors the book stock and now holds a budget to provide additional funds for the purchase of books and other media, and to improve the student experience more generally.

39 The College has a comprehensive information and learning technology strategy, with a clear replacement cycle and prioritisation of projects, including the virtual learning environment. The College's general classrooms are well equipped and some specialist facilities, such as for equine studies, are state of the art. The academic staff are committed, enthusiastic and well qualified and meet the needs of the provision. There are technicians for the specialist art and design and equine programmes, but not for the construction and engineering programmes. All staff access the wide range of staff development available. Overall, the College ensures the sufficiency and accessibility of learning resources to enable students to achieve the programme intended learning outcomes.

**The team concludes that it has confidence in the College'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 College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?**

40 The Academic and Operational Agreement with the University sets out clearly the nature of the shared responsibility for publishing information. The College is responsible for the production of a higher education prospectus and website information, programme leaflets and general information for employers and students. It is also responsible for the information provided to the UCAS admissions system.

41 The College's website has a dedicated University Centre section, which is updated regularly and is easy to navigate. It provides the ability to download the higher education prospectus and programme leaflets, derived from prospectus material. The leaflets lack explicit reference to the awarding bodies, but the overall website makes these very clear. The website also provides generic information covering the College Student Charter, student support, financial support, equality and diversity, complaints and disciplinary processes.



42 Students on relevant courses are provided, at induction, with material published by the University, including programme specifications, the Undergraduate Student Handbook, Abridged Assessment Regulations and Academic Regulations. In these documents no local information can be included. This ensures parity with all students studying at the University and partner institutions. The University produces programme handbooks and module guides, which are discussed at the discipline network groups. The College is able to make appropriate additions to customise them for the students. Edexcel students are provided with a similar range of materials produced by the College.

43 The information published is comprehensive, with student handbooks containing comprehensive course structure and assessment information as well as college policies and procedures and learning resource information. The handbooks are available online. Where students undertake workplace learning, guidance is provided for mentors and students, and the partner colleges on the teacher education programme have designed a mentor handbook.

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

44 The Manager of the University Centre is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of information and works closely with the awarding bodies to ensure it meets the requirements of their information protocols and branding requirements. The University checks specific branding and information protocols prior to publication.

45 The Head of Marketing and Student Services takes responsibility for maintaining the programme information on the College's website. Updates to information are passed to the marketing team, who ensure consistency of style and accuracy. The Higher Education Student Support Coordinator provides annually updated information to the UCAS Website. The responsibility for producing curriculum information rests with the programme team and, in particular, the course directors. They liaise with the Manager of the University Centre, who has final responsibility and checks the information provided. The College's virtual learning environment is being used increasingly in the support for, and delivery of learning and assessment. The Manager of the University Centre is reviewing with course directors how the materials can be more closely monitored for accuracy.

46 As a result of good practice identified in the Developmental engagement the College has adopted a robust system to check that all students have received all necessary materials during induction and have signed to agree the receipt. The students confirmed that they receive all the information they need to achieve the programme intended learning outcomes and the information accurately reflects their experience on the programmes. Management meetings, annual monitoring, other feedback, such as at open days, and University periodic review and programme approval processes confirm the effectiveness of the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information.

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

## **C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment**

47 The Developmental engagement in assessment was undertaken in December 2008. The lines of enquiry covered all the core themes and were as follows:

- How far do processes of programme monitoring and evaluation contribute to the review and enhancement of assessment practice and ensure that academic standards are maintained?
- To what extent is feedback to students on assessment effective and consistent?
- How far is information provided to students about the assessment process, comprehensive, consistent, clear and accurate?

These lines of enquiry covered the implementation of the awarding body regulations on assessment across the programmes and the responsibilities of the College in these processes.

48 The Developmental engagement identified a number of areas of good practice. These included the College annual monitoring reports, which contribute significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities; assessment feedback forms which provide enhanced feedback detail on some programmes; the individual feedback form which records the outcomes of tutorial discussions on the Diploma in Teaching; the effective use of the virtual learning environment for feedback on some programmes; and the variety of formative assessment feedback. The induction checklist on the BSc Computer Science and HNC Construction programmes to confirm the receipt of assessment information, the FD Early Years, Childcare and Education handbook, which is enhanced to reflect local practice and assessment briefs on the HND Civil Engineering that engaged students through clarity and visual design, were also good practice.

49 The team considered it advisable that the College should review its committee structure to establish more effective oversight of its higher education provision. The team also recommended that it would be desirable that the College review the role of the Higher Education Steering Group in the dissemination of good practice; make more consistent use of module questionnaires and College surveys for monitoring and evaluation of assessment; and formalise student representation and feedback arrangements. It would also be desirable that the College develop and embed employer engagement and improve guidance to employers to ensure appropriate employer involvement in the assessment process; develop a process for the coordination and monitoring of staff development to underpin assessment practice; provide the opportunity for prospective students from the College further education programmes to meet the higher education programme teams to obtain more information; and to review the College Charter to ensure consistency of assessment feedback information.

## D Foundation Degrees

50 The College currently offers two Foundation Degrees, the FD Early Years, Childcare and Education at the Kings' Lynn Campus and the FD Equine Studies, which is jointly delivered by College and University staff at Cambridge. The FD Animal Welfare and Behaviour was also validated in 2008-09 but was not offered in September 2009. Foundation Degrees are a key part of the higher education strategy to develop new higher education programmes in response to student and employer needs. The Strategic Plan also sees Foundation Degrees as an important route to improve progression in the College from level 3 programmes. Proposed future developments of Foundation Degrees for 2011-12 recruitment include Veterinary Nursing and Motor Sport.

51 The review confirms that the programmes are aligned to the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*. There is direct involvement of employers at validation and the joint development and delivery with the University of the FD Equine Studies is based on working with new national employers. The programmes are aligned to the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*. Overall the College has in place effective management of the academic standards and quality of learning opportunities of its Foundation Degrees.

52 The good practice and recommendations identified during the Summative review are common to the whole provision. These are listed in the main conclusions.

## E Conclusions and summary of judgements

53 The team has identified a number of features of good practice in The College of West Anglia's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding bodies, Anglia Ruskin University and Edexcel.

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

- the comprehensive nature and scope of the links between the College and the University enables, at a strategic and operational level, the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the provision and collaborative developments, such as the joint validation and delivery of Foundation Degrees (paragraph 12)
- the variety and extent of staff development supports the advanced professional development of staff, which contributes significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of the higher education ethos and quality of the provision (paragraphs 22 to 23 and 34 to 36).
- the use made by teacher education and early years programmes of the virtual learning environment, including discussion boards, feedback from student review meetings and assessment feedback, enables effective remote interaction of staff and students to support learning (paragraph 28)

55 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding bodies.

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

- review its systems and procedures to ensure the systematic reporting, analysis and review of trends in cohort retention, progression and achievement data across the programmes (paragraph 14)
- review the annual monitoring reports and action plans to ensure their rigorous completion in order to support quality improvement (paragraph 18)
- review and implement student feedback mechanisms to obtain more comprehensive data on programme-specific experience (paragraph 30).

56 Based upon its analysis of the College'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 College 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.

57 Based upon its analysis of the College'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 College 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.

58 Based upon its analysis of the College'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 completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
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 <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the college:						
● the comprehensive nature and scope of the links between the College and the University enables, at a strategic and operational level, the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the provision and collaborative developments, such as the joint validation and delivery of Foundation Degrees (paragraph 12)	Discuss, consider and plan relevant actions to further partnership links at a strategic level with the University at Board meetings	September 2010 and ongoing	Joint Venture Company Board/ Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Completion of identified actions	Joint Venture Company Board	Review of further collaborative provision being delivered by Higher Education Steering Group
	Further develop collaborative partnership with proposed pathways eg Motorsport and Veterinary Nursing	December 2010	Heads of Faculties	Pathway validation(s)	Higher Education Steering Group Senior Management Team Performance Review and Quality Committee	Review of further collaborative provision being delivered by Higher Education Steering Group

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the use made by teacher education and early years programmes of the virtual learning environment, including discussion boards, feedback from student review meetings and assessment feedback, enables effective remote interaction of staff and students to support learning (paragraph 28)</li> </ul>	<p>Establish a working group to review use of Virtual Learning Environment, and agree actions to further embed the use of the Virtual Learning Environment. For example, Learning Practice to promote and deliver Virtual Learning Environment modules. Learning Practice to report on Virtual Learning Environment usage to Managers</p>	September 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Completion of identified actions	Higher Education Steering Group	Increased resources on Virtual Learning Environment and the use of the Virtual Learning Environment by students and staff

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	Actively consider and enact ways of promoting the Virtual Learning Environment (eg Virtual Learning Environment Awards).	September 2010	Higher Education Steering Group	Increased resources on Virtual Learning Environment use of use of the Virtual Learning Environment by students and staff	Performance Review and Quality Committee	Tracking Key Performance Indicators on staff and student usage of the Virtual Learning Environment
	Share good practice by experienced academic staff for Higher Education staff training days	September 2010	Course Directors	Higher Education staff training days identified	Human Resources department	Increased resources on Virtual Learning Environment and the use of the Virtual Learning Environment by students and staff

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the variety and extent of staff development supports the advanced professional development of staff, which contributes significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of the higher education ethos and quality of the provision. (paragraphs 22 to 23 and 34 to 36)</li> </ul>	Develop a joint statement on Staff Development Expectations between the College of West Anglia and Anglia Ruskin University. Present at Higher Education Steering Group for consultation	September 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Joint statement written and agreed	Joint Venture Company	Monitor training activities through Inset, appraisals and Continuous Professional Development logs
	Produce an annual staff training plan for Higher Education professional development	September 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Staff training plan developed	Executive Director Curriculum	Via Self Assessment Report and In Service Training Committee
	Organise specific Higher Education development sessions which	December 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia/Course Directors	Good practice maintained as agenda item on Higher Education	Executive Director Curriculum	Analysis of In Service Training Forms



The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	encourage sharing of good practice Engage with University staff development opportunities as available	October 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia/Course teams	Steering Group meetings  Staff attendance at University staff development events and reported at Higher Education Steering Group	Executive Director Curriculum	Review of attendance records at Higher Education Steering Group
	Appropriate members of staff to gain membership of the Higher Education Academy at Associate or Fellow level	June 2011	Manager, University Centre West Anglia/Heads of Faculties	Higher Education Academy representative attend College training session	Executive Director Curriculum	Review at Higher Education Steering Group

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team agreed the following areas where it would be <b>desired</b> to take action:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review its systems and procedures to ensure the systematic reporting, analysis and review of trends in cohort retention, progression and achievement data across the programmes (paragraph 14)</li> </ul>	Annual monitoring report to be revised to include full retention, progression and achievement data over a 3 year period	July 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Revised annual monitoring report used by all Course Directors.	Executive Director Curriculum/ Head of Quality	Reporting evidenced in Higher Education Self Assessment Report and smarter reporting available to allow analysis and benchmarking
	Curriculum Standards Committee to review all Higher Education data (including trends) and identify improvements to be made. Performance	March 2011	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Improvement in trends	Executive Director Curriculum/ Head of Quality	Reporting evidenced in Higher Education Self Assessment Report and smarter reporting available to allow analysis and benchmarking

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	<p>Review and Quality Committee to review Higher Education trend data.</p> <p>Manager, University Centre West Anglia to work with the Assistant Director (Strategic Planning) ARU to set up procedures to ensure the systematic reporting of data of College of West Anglia to College of West Anglia across all programmes</p>	September 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	<p>Trend data received by College of West Anglia Higher Education Steering Group to review Improvement in trends</p>	Executive Director Curriculum/ Head of Quality	<p>Reporting evidenced in Higher Education Self Assessment Report and smarter reporting available to allow analysis and benchmarking</p>

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review the annual monitoring reports and action plans to ensure their rigorous completion in order to support quality improvement (paragraph 18)</li> </ul>	To publish guidelines outlining the minimum expectation for completion of the annual monitoring report including employer input	September 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	All course directors using guidelines	Executive Director Curriculum	All annual monitoring reports show consistent reporting and action plans
	To review the annual monitoring reports during the first semester round of Curriculum Standards meetings with Head of Faculties, Executive Director of Curriculum and Head of Organisational	November 2010	Curriculum Standards Committee	Review of annual monitoring reports to be an agenda item and actions agreed and implemented. Review then disseminated by Head of Faculty to pathway delivery team for action. Agreed actions	Higher Education Steering group	All annual monitoring reports show consistent reporting and action plans

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010							
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review and implement student feedback mechanisms to obtain more comprehensive data on programme specific experience (paragraph 30)</li> </ul>	Development and Quality			successfully completed			
	To carry out programme specific surveys to obtain qualitative and quantitative data during the first semester of programmes	December 2010	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Programme specific survey distributed to all students for completion	Executive Director Curriculum	Analysis of student surveys to provide comprehensive student evaluation	
	Provide an analysis of student feedback within the Annual Monitoring Report and identify relevant actions.	March 2011	Manager, University Centre West Anglia/Heads of Faculty, Course teams/ Course Directors	Analysis of data to be tabled at relevant meetings. Actions to be completed	Executive Director Curriculum	Via Self Assessment Report	
	To generate a report of student opinion across the College and present to	April 2011	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Analysis of data to be tabled at relevant meetings. Actions to be completed	Senior Management Team, Tuesday Managers, Higher Education	Via Self Assessment Report	

The College of West Anglia action plan relating to the Summative review: April 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
	Senior Management Team, Tuesday Managers, Higher Education Steering Group, Performance Review and Quality Committee and identify relevant actions  To audit proactive use of outcomes	April 2011	Manager, University Centre West Anglia	Student satisfaction levels improved	Steering Group, Performance Review and Quality Committee  Higher Education Steering group	Via Self Assessment Report

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