



## **Integrated quality and enhancement review**

**Summative review**

May 2010

City College Coventry

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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 City College Coventry carried out in May 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/or 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 clear and comprehensive guidance for staff on the internal verification and written feedback process.

### 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 **advisable** for the College to:

- ensure that management of higher education is included in the College's Quality Framework which should be referenced to the Academic Infrastructure
- consolidate and extend the terms of reference for the Higher Education Committee so that major issues arising from external examiners' reports and annual monitoring reports from awarding bodies are scrutinised and actions noted
- ensure that the Higher Education Forum meets and that more effort is made to familiarise students with its existence and function
- enhance staff development opportunities specific to higher education
- enhance its library provision for higher education in all programme areas.

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

- ensure that the format of the College self-evaluation document is developed to reflect higher education by including, for example, external examiner reports, course organisers' reports and reports from the awarding bodies
- complete and approve its Higher Education Strategy
- produce a document that identifies the quality cycle and reporting arrangements for the management of higher education and enables staff to have a clear understanding of the process
- develop clear guidance for staff and students about the ways in which student feedback is gathered, responded to and acted upon

- ensure that its Learning and Teaching Strategy and its observation of teaching make more reference to higher education
- develop a formal approach to the continued development and enhancement of its virtual learning environment for use by its higher education staff and students
- to monitor the higher education information on the website and in the Higher Education Prospectus, including information on tuition fees.

## 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 City College Coventry. 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 Coventry University, Edexcel and the University of Warwick. The review was carried out by Ms Amanda Broughton, Mr Maldwyn Buckland and Mr Colin Stanfield (reviewers), and Mr Philip Markey (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, employers and 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 the 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 (FD) awards, Section D of this report summarises details of the FD programmes delivered at the College.

4 City College Coventry was established in 2002 following the merger of Coventry Technical College and Tile Hill College. In 2009, the College moved to new single site premises in Swanswell in the centre of Coventry. This forms part of the city's Learning Quarter with Coventry University and a new Academy School. The College's mission is to 'respond to the diverse educational needs of our learners, to raise continuously the standard of our education and training services, and to take education further into our business and social communities'. Progression opportunities to local universities are encouraged and the higher education provision contributes to the College's widening participation targets. The College is involved with the Coventry and Warwickshire Lifelong Learning Network.

5 The College has a total of 9,237 enrolled students for further education and 239.12 full-time equivalent students (FTEs) for its higher education provision. These are made up of 188.75 full-time and 50.37 part-time FTEs. The College's higher education provision is organised into five of the seven schools: Engineering and Transport Technologies; Humanities, Science and Business; Teaching and Learning; Creative and Digital Technologies; and Health Care and Early Years. All higher education students are taught on one site.



6 The higher education programmes at the College funded by HEFCE are listed below, under the awarding body and with the FTEs in brackets:

### **Coventry University**

- Business Foundation Programme (1+3) (Franchised) (12)
- FdEng Engineering (6.35)
- HNC Business Management (13)
- HND Business Management (22).

### **Edexcel**

- HNC Performing Arts (Performance) (26)
- HND Computing (General) (41)
- HND Interactive Media (11)
- HND Music Production (18)
- HND Performing Arts (Performance) (10).

### **University of Warwick**

- BA (Hons) Social Studies (2+2) (24.75)
- BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies (2+2) (24)
- Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (29.02)
- FdA Post Compulsory Education and Training (Franchised) (2).

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

7 The College has worked with Coventry University since the early 1990s delivering programmes in engineering and business. Recently, the University validated an FdSc in Engineering Manufacturing. The HNC and HND business programmes changed to validation arrangements in September 2009. Arrangements with the University of Warwick focus on education, social studies and early childhood studies. Edexcel programmes include music production, interactive media, computing and performing arts. Partnership agreements clearly set out the respective responsibilities of the awarding bodies and the College.

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

8 The College moved into new purpose-built accommodation in the centre of Coventry in 2009. In the same year, the College lost a major contract to deliver training for a large local employer under a tendering process. As a consequence, all the trainees, who formed the vast majority of the FdEng programme, transferred to another College, along with staff who delivered this programme. There is strong recruitment in the performing arts programmes. The College has produced a draft Higher Education Strategy.

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

9 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team. With guidance from staff, a selection of students produced a written submission based on a series of prompt questions. The written submission was brief, but it provided the team with some information relevant to the review. The team met with students and was able to discuss the written submission. Students said they were aware of it and that it reflected their views.

## **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 College has a recently developed management and reporting system for its higher education programmes. The Cross-College Curriculum Manager is responsible for higher education and has an important monitoring role for the institutional oversight of academic standards and quality. The Manager reports to the Vice Principal for Quality and Curriculum. Programme areas have course organisers who are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning and maintain all documentation relating to the management, assessment and internal verification process. Minutes from course organisers' meetings are comprehensive and confirm that they meet regularly to discuss a variety of operational matters. Heads of school and programme area managers are responsible for monitoring the quality of programmes. The Quality Improvement Manager is responsible for gathering and recording reports. All programmes fall within the College's Quality Framework and are subject to the same quality monitoring and improvement processes as employed with further education programmes. Higher education is not specifically referred to in this document. It is recommended as advisable that the management of higher education should be included in the College's Quality Framework and that it refers to the Academic Infrastructure.

11 Following the Developmental engagement, a Higher Education Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Academic Board, was established. The terms of reference for the Committee indicate that in the future a more strategic emphasis will be placed on higher education matters. Members will be co-opted as required and issues reported to Academic Board. The Committee has only met on one occasion since its inception in November 2009. It is recommended as advisable that the remit of the Higher Education Committee be consolidated and extended so that major issues arising from external examiners' reports and annual monitoring reports from awarding bodies are scrutinised and actions noted. Higher education issues are also discussed at executive meetings and key performance indicator meetings, which monitor admissions, retention and attendance.

12 Several reports are used to monitor the higher education standards. Both partner universities produce annual quality monitoring reports on franchised and validated programmes. The Initial Teacher Training Programme Area Manager produces an annual self-assessment report for the University of Warwick. Each course organiser completes an annual self-evaluation document. This is based on the College's further education template. The outcomes of these reports are used to produce a college self-evaluation document, from which a cross-college higher education action plan is derived. The Cross-College

Curriculum Manager monitors the implementation of this plan. Both the current college self-evaluation document and the cross-college action plan are limited in their coverage of issues. The format of the higher education programme self-evaluation document is being reviewed. The team recommends as desirable that the format of the College self-evaluation document is developed to reflect higher education by including, for example, external examiner reports, course organisers' reports and reports from the awarding bodies.

13 Students' contributions are considered in the management of standards. Results of student surveys are published on the College's intranet. The College's Quality Unit produces a summary report. The College has established a Higher Education Forum to enable students to discuss issues. At the time of the review this committee had not met and students told the team that they had not heard of the committee. It is recommended as advisable that the Higher Education Forum meet and that more effort is made to familiarise students with its existence and function.

14 The College's Higher Education Strategy is still at the draft stage. The document sets out plans for developing higher education and is linked to the College's corporate objectives. However, it has not been approved by the Corporation of the College. It is recommended as desirable that the College complete and approve its Higher Education Strategy. The College's self-evaluation for the Summative review did not explain its management structure and reporting arrangements with sufficient clarity and the College was asked to provide further information. Even with this further information, the team had some difficulty in understanding these arrangements. It is recommended as desirable that the College produce a document that identifies the quality cycle and reporting arrangements for the management of higher education, and enables staff to have a clear understanding of the process.

15 Following the Developmental engagement, an overall assessment policy applicable to higher education has been developed. This includes two key documents, namely the Internal Verification Handbook and Guidance on Giving Feedback for higher education programmes. These provide clear and comprehensive guidance for staff on the internal verification and written feedback process and are examples of good practice. To address plagiarism the College has purchased a plagiarism detection software programme and staff are currently being trained to use this, with the intention to implement it fully in 2010-11. It is already used on the BA (Hons) Social Studies (2+2) degree and staff confirmed they and students have found it useful. Students said that they are aware of the assessment criteria and learning outcomes. The Higher Education Assessment Regulations, developed as a response to the Developmental engagement, are thorough and detailed. They emphasise how assessment is linked to learning opportunities and progression. Students said that their work is returned in a timely manner and written feedback is comprehensive and supportive.

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

16 The Vice Principal for Quality and Curriculum and the Cross-College Curriculum Manager are responsible for ensuring that staff are aware of the Academic Infrastructure. Staff attended sessions delivered by the Cross-College Curriculum Manager on the Academic Infrastructure. Awarding bodies' validation documents and events ensure that the Academic Infrastructure is considered. The recently developed assessment policy made use of the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students* and the FdEng Engineering programme's guidance for work-based learning referred to the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark* and 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?**

17 The College undertakes to meet its obligations under the partnership agreements and with Edexcel. The agreements identify the College's responsibilities for the provision of accommodation and learning resources, the delivery of programmes, forwarding curricula vitae of staff for approval, appraisals, admissions and recruitment, and student support. The effectiveness of the College in carrying out these responsibilities is subject to monitoring and evaluation as specified in the partnership agreements. This is mainly addressed in the annual monitoring reports and the College's responses to them. These reports indicate that the College is fulfilling its obligations as required by the awarding bodies.

18 There is a separate internal validation process for all new programmes to ensure the developments are in line with the College's strategic aims. These validations also enable the College to demonstrate that it is meeting the requirements of the awarding bodies for managing and delivering higher education standards. There is a revised process in the College for internal validation, which will involve proposals going to the Higher Education Committee for approval before being forwarded to the awarding bodies. To date this has not taken place as no new programmes have been put forward for validation.

19 The College meets its requirements to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the assessment process is consistent, fair and reliable. The Developmental engagement noted some good practices in assessment. The Cross-College Curriculum Manager and course leaders receive external examiners' reports. External examiners' reports are dealt with effectively and shared with the awarding bodies to ensure that both parties are aware of any issues and subsequent action plans. External examiners' reports confirm that academic standards are being met. Staff from the awarding bodies confirm that there are effective communications with the College for the management of external examiners' reports. From 2010, an independent chair will lead the College examination boards for validated programmes and actions arising from these will be reported to the Higher Education Committee and then to the awarding body.

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

20 The College has a Human Resources Strategy, which outlines its commitment to staff development. Staff development needs are gathered in a number of ways. Course organisers identify programme needs for individuals and teams. Heads of schools in their strategic plans also identify staff development needs. The College appraisal procedure is also used. Staff confirmed that they attend staff development opportunities at partner universities. For example, the course organiser for the BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies attended the University of Warwick for training and development and an external conference on 'Every Child Matters', which has led to changes in the programme. Staff confirmed that the College is supportive in providing staff development opportunities. Staff development is planned on the new BTEC awards to conform to the College's Qualifications Curriculum Framework. Specialist training is also provided for those delivering BTEC awards.

21 The College organises higher education staff development activities in the form of annual full and half away days for staff delivering programmes. This gives the opportunity for staff to meet to discuss higher education issues, such as training on completion of self-evaluation reports, dealing with plagiarism and the production of handbooks. In the

programme self-evaluation documents, staff are asked to evaluate activities they have undertaken during the year. The quality of the evaluations will be a focus for training for completing the next self-evaluation document.

**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?**

22 The management and reporting arrangements for learning opportunities are similar to those for academic standards as identified in paragraphs 10 to 13. The Vice Principal for Quality and Curriculum has specific responsibility for the strategic management of higher education provision and the Cross-College Curriculum Manager acts as the Higher Education Manager at an operational level for learning resources. The College's responsibilities cover the management of learning opportunities including learning resources, learning and teaching and student support. The Vice Principal (Quality and Curriculum) and the Vice Principal (Professional Development) are responsible for monitoring key performance indicators, including those for teaching and learning, such as observation reports, student feedback and progression. There is a weekly meeting of the Key Performance Indicator Group to monitor these.

23 All reports dealing with the management of higher education include sections on learning opportunities. The College's self-evaluation provides information on learning opportunities and it is intended that this document will be revised to have more focus on higher education. The self-evaluations for BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies 2008-09 and for BA (Hons) Social Studies 2008-09 are noticeably thorough in dealing with learning opportunities. The work of the new Higher Education Committee will add rigour to the consideration of learning opportunities.

24 The College recognises the need to enhance quality of feedback to students and to respond to student representations. Students confirmed this by commenting that while individual tutors do their best to resolve issues, responses to student representative meetings were sometimes slow and the meetings themselves were irregular. They were also not aware of responses to questionnaires. Once established, the work of the Higher Education Forum should help to resolve these matters. Nevertheless, it is recommended as desirable that the College seek to develop clear guidance for staff and students about the ways in which student feedback is gathered, responded to and acted upon.

**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 College's partnership agreements with its awarding bodies and the responsibilities are described in paragraphs 17 to 19. The College is responsible for ensuring that learning opportunities are appropriate, namely those activities relating directly to students, such as teaching, recruitment, assessment and the provision of resources and support. For example, while the awarding bodies are responsible for approving teachers, once teachers are approved the College is responsible for classroom delivery of the programmes and the quality of teaching and learning.

26 Learning opportunities are monitored through the awarding bodies' annual reports. The College responds to any requirements identified in the reports. Similarly, when external examiners comment on learning opportunities, the College is required to make a response. In all cases, the College is able to assure its awarding bodies that students receive appropriate learning opportunities. Other mechanisms include regular meetings of university link tutors and course organisers to discuss issues relating to the students' learning experiences.

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

27 As noted in paragraph 16, the College has identified staff to ensure that the Academic Infrastructure is taken into account and there have been staff development sessions to support this. Information on learning opportunities is provided in validation documents with references to the Academic Infrastructure. In their meeting with the team, staff were able to articulate on the use of the different elements of the Academic Infrastructure in programme developments, assessment and learning and teaching. Minutes of course organisers' meetings show that staff are aware of the Academic Infrastructure.

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

28 The College's Learning and Teaching Strategy (2009) relates to all programmes including higher education, although its focus is on further education. The College has several processes to assure itself that the quality of learning and teaching is being maintained and enhanced. All teaching staff have an annual developmental appraisal and an annual graded teaching observation. The latter are based on Ofsted criteria. Observation grades are monitored by the Vice Principal for Communications, People and Development and a recently established Professional Development Committee identifies any subsequent staff development needs. The College has concluded that there is a need for observations of teaching to take more account of criteria related to higher education. Of 18 observations of teaching higher education classes, 16 were judged to be good or better based on Ofsted criteria; none were graded unsatisfactory. Twelve cross-college advanced practitioners are deployed to support and guide teaching staff to develop their teaching and learning. It is recommended as desirable that the College's Learning and Teaching Strategy and its observations of teaching make more reference to higher education.

29 The College seeks to recruit appropriately qualified teaching staff to higher education programmes who possess appropriate vocational qualifications and experience. The self-evaluation cites the direct vocational or professional background of its teaching workforce and the 'very effective teaching of practical skills'. The team can confirm from staff records that staff are well qualified for the teaching of skills. Staff were able to give examples of how their engagement with the industry or profession was used to inform teaching and learning.

30 Data arising from student feedback is managed by the Quality Unit and is used to inform self-evaluation reports about the quality of learning and teaching. In their meeting with the team, students made some positive comments about the quality of teaching, such as the ability of staff to use their professional expertise. Students were especially positive about their learning experiences in the HND Music Production programme. However, they also commented that in two cases they considered that the quality of teaching and learning was limited, as a consequence of staff inexperience and limited knowledge of their subject.

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

31 The College has a well-organised system to ensure that students are supported effectively. From admissions to induction and support during their studies, the College provides effective personal and academic guidance. Students are assigned to a progress tutor for their academic support. Students were very positive about the quality of support available directly from these tutors and from other support services to which they were directed. Programme area managers are tasked with the development of tutorial provision, with lead progress tutors identifying and promoting best practice. There is a Progress Tutors' Guide outlining tutorial support procedures for higher education students.

32 Academic support is also available through the awarding bodies. Students on programmes of the University of Warwick and Coventry University emphasised how much they valued such support. This included university staff visiting the College to undertake targeted support sessions and students attending the universities for support. The effectiveness of tutorial support is evaluated through student feedback, self-assessment reports and, in 2009-10, will be the subject of the Annual Self-Assessment Report of Students Services. Tutorials will also be subject to formal observation in 2009-10 in recognition of the need to capture current good practice and to enhance academic support.

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

33 Staff development is also outlined in paragraphs 20 and 21. The College's Learning and Teaching Strategy recognises 'professional development as the main lever for improving teaching and learning'. A newly established Professional Development Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Academic Board, has an overview of professional development across the College. At programme level, course organisers share the responsibility for mentoring staff new to higher education with the advanced practitioners. Much staff development is based mainly on further education needs. The College has identified the need to enhance the quality of teaching and learning through differentiating more between further and higher education. Correspondingly, the College recognises that there needs to be more staff development that is more relevant to higher education. It is recommended as advisable that the College seek to enhance staff development opportunities specific to higher education.

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

34 The College has a process for allocating resources to programmes, although there is no specific budget for higher education. The process includes specialist resources, and those for computing and the library. Programme area managers liaise with their heads of schools to determine the allocation of resources. Resource requirements are set out in validation documents and are discussed during the approval process. The awarding bodies have the right to comment on the appropriateness of resources. The College is in the process of developing a new internal validation process, which will formalise the resource allocation process.

35 Course organisers inform the College's Head of Library Resources about specific needs for books and journals. Students may make direct requests to the library staff, although not all students were aware of this. For the University of Warwick programmes, a member of its library team attends staff/student liaison meetings at the College. Students on validated or franchised programmes have access to library resources at the universities, although there

was some uncertainty among business management students regarding their entitlement to access resources. Other students were very positive about the opportunity to access university resources. However, students are very critical of higher education library resources at the College. Some Classroom Observation and Learner Talkback reports also indicate that students have expressed a number of concerns about the adequacy of library resources for higher education. It is recommended as advisable that the College enhance its library provision for higher education in all programme areas.

36 Student learning is supported through the use of the College's virtual learning environment. There is variation in the extent to which the virtual learning environment is used by programmes. As noted in the Developmental engagement, where it is developed as a learning resource, it is much appreciated by students. This includes the learning and assessment materials which facilitate students' independent learning. It is recommended as desirable that the College develop a formal approach to the continued development and enhancement of its virtual learning environment for use by its higher education staff and students.

**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?**

37 The partnership agreements make it clear what the College is responsible for regarding public information and what approval is required for the use of university logos. The College produces a range of published information at both institutional and programme level in electronic forms. There is also an extensive range of paper-based documents such as the College's Student Handbook and programme and module handbooks. Recently, new documents have been introduced including the Mentors Handbook for work-based learning on the FdEng, the Internal Verification and Monitoring Handbook for Higher Education and the Assessment Regulations for Higher Education Programmes.

38 Detailed information on the programme structure, assessments and support arrangements are provided in each programme handbook. The format of the handbooks has been revised. The College has established a procedure for checking that all handbooks for programmes commencing in September 2010 will conform to the new format. Both universities have viewed the new format and agreed that it can be used. The format of module handbooks and unit guides varies. All handbooks are accurate and complete regarding the information on programme structures, assessment and student support.

39 The College has developed its website with a dedicated higher education section. The website offers access to higher education information, but the team encountered some difficulties in accessing specific information and, in the case of part-time study and tuition fees, information was sparse or outdated. Information relating to academic programmes was generally accurate and complete. No formal procedures are in place for coordinating and updating the website, but the College confirmed it was exploring the utilisation of software capable of providing automatic prompts to assist in setting review dates for updating information.



40 The College produces an annual Higher Education Prospectus. The current publication 2010-11 is a joint venture with another college. The team acknowledges that this joint venture represents an innovative and enterprising approach to marketing, but found a number of inconsistencies and misleading information. The joint Principals' Welcome page confirms that both colleges will not charge top-up fees for directly-funded programmes. There is, however, a note stating that students on programmes franchised from Coventry University will have to pay top-up fees. Again, on the general information page, inconsistencies were found. There is explicit information on full and part-time tuition fees for HNDs/Cs, but none relating to honours degrees. Information for both college staff and students can be found on the virtual learning environment. It is recommended as desirable that the College put in place measures to check the higher education information on the website and in the Higher Education Prospectus, including information on tuition fees.

**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?**

41 The College's partnership arrangements with the University of Warwick and Coventry University clearly outline the responsibilities of the College in relation to published information. However, the College's self-evaluation did not clarify the systems and procedures for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information that it publishes. Terms of reference for the new Higher Education Committee confirm it has a responsibility for monitoring marketing and supporting the development of initiatives to secure growth in higher education provision. The team did note that the minutes of the inaugural Higher Education Committee confirmed discussion relating to the current Higher Education Prospectus.

42 Monitoring activities take place at programme level. In their meeting with the team, course organisers articulated the process for the development and approval of academic and pastoral information contained in the Higher Education Prospectus and pages on the website, but it was clear to the team that this was not consistent practice across all provision. At present, individual course organisers develop appropriate material in conjunction with staff which is collated and evaluated by the Cross-College Curriculum Manager. The Cross-College Curriculum Manager explained that all material approved was passed onto the Marketing Team for paper-based publishing and Student Services for website publication.

**The team considers that reliance can be placed on the accuracy and/or 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**

43 The Development engagement took place in May 2009. The lines of enquiry were:

- How effective is the College's internal verification system in maintaining academic standards?
- How well is written feedback used to support students in achieving the intended learning outcomes and improving their grades?
- Do student handbooks give students accurate information about assessment?

44 There were six areas of good practice. The first identified the good relationships with the higher education institutions that facilitate effective and open communication channels to address important interface issues. This good relationship ensured that any changes to assessment practices and developments were clear. There was a robust internal verification process for all programmes and there were excellent examples of written feedback with effective one-to-one tutorials on demand. Written feedback is supplemented by one-to-one tutorials. Finally, some programmes made effective use of the virtual learning environment to provide course handbooks and associated assessment documentation.

45 The College was advised to develop an overall assessment policy, which addresses internal verification, second-marking, and moderation within it, in a way which is more transparently related to the precepts outlined in the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*. It was also advised to implement the new guidance on giving feedback. It was advised to put in place new assessment procedures agreed with the University of Warwick on franchised programmes. Finally, it was advised to implement a standard format with minimum defined content for validated and College programme handbooks. There were five desirable recommendations. Feedback sheets should be signed and dated by the assessor or verifier and include a space to enable students to comment and sign. It was also desirable for the College to continue its plans to introduce a common assignment template and feedback documents for BTEC programmes and to introduce appropriate electronic dissemination of programme handbooks and other assessment information across all programmes. Handbooks for franchised programmes should adopt a standard template and there should be a system to support and monitor the development of handbooks and share the good practice according to the new guidelines.

## **D Foundation Degrees**

46 The College offers two Foundation Degrees: FdEng Engineering with 6.35 FTEs validated by Coventry University and FdA Post Compulsory Education and Training, a franchised programme with the University of Warwick with two FTEs. The College lost a contract with a local major employer for the engineering programme and as a consequence there has been a reduced intake. Progression arrangements are in place for both programmes. The College's draft Higher Education Strategy refers to possible developments of the Foundation Degree provision in areas such as creative industries, medical technologies, sustainable power and telecommunications.

47 The team's findings and conclusions listed in paragraphs 48 to 52 relate to all the College's higher education provision, including the Foundation Degrees that it offers on behalf of the awarding bodies.

## E Conclusions and summary of judgements

48 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in City College Coventry'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, Coventry University, the University of Warwick and Edexcel.

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

- the clear and comprehensive guidance for staff on the internal verification and the written feedback process (paragraph 15).

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

51 The team also agreed a number of areas where the College is **advised** to take action:

- to ensure that management of higher education is included in the College's Quality Framework which should be referenced to the Academic Infrastructure (paragraph 10)
- to consolidate and extend the terms of reference for the Higher Education Committee so that major issues arising from external examiners' reports and annual monitoring reports from awarding bodies are scrutinised and actions noted (paragraph 11)
- to ensure that the Higher Education Forum meets and that more effort is made to familiarise students with its existence and function (paragraph 13)
- to enhance staff development opportunities specific to higher education (paragraph 33)
- to enhance its library provision for higher education in all programme areas (paragraph 35).

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

- to ensure that the format of the College self-evaluation document is developed to reflect higher education by including, for example, external examiner reports, course organisers' reports and reports from the awarding bodies (paragraph 12)
- to complete and approve its Higher Education Strategy (paragraph 14)
- to produce a document which identifies the quality cycle and reporting arrangements for the management of higher education that would enable staff to have a clear understanding of the process (paragraph 14)
- to develop clear guidance for staff and students about the ways in which student feedback is gathered, responded to and acted upon (paragraph 24)
- to ensure that its Learning and Teaching Strategy and its observations of teaching make more reference to higher education (paragraph 28)
- to develop a formal approach to the continued development and enhancement of its virtual learning environment for use by its higher education staff and students (paragraph 36)

- to check the higher education information on the website and in the Higher Education Prospectus, including information on tuition fees (paragraph 40).

53 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.

54 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.

55 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.

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 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:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the clear and comprehensive guidance for staff on the internal verification and the written feedback process (paragraph 15)</li> </ul>	<p>Review Internal Verification Handbook for HE programmes and guidance on giving written feedback documents for 2010/11. Send out to tutors. Refer to documents as appropriate in action plans to address actions in external examiner reports</p>	30 July 2010	Cross-College Curriculum Manager	Documents revised and on intranet as planned. References in action plans	HE Committee	Documents are fit for purpose and used by HE staff

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010						
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<p>The team agreed a number of areas where the College should be <b>advised</b> to take action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to ensure that management of higher education is included in the College's Quality Framework and refers to the Academic Infrastructure (paragraph 10)</li> </ul>	<p>Review the College's Quality Framework for 2010/11 and ensure explicit reference is made to the management of higher education and the Academic Infrastructure</p>	<p>July 2010</p>	<p>Vice Principal for Quality and Curriculum/ Quality Improvement Manager</p>	<p>2010/11 Quality Framework amended to more explicitly reflect the management of higher education</p>	<p>Executive HE Committee</p>	<p>Classroom Observation &amp; Learner Talkback Weeks (COLTs) which will include learner feedback and a review of record files which will provide evidence of compliance in the implementation of the 2010/11 Quality Framework. The annual self-assessment will also comment on compliance</p>

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010						
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to consolidate and extend the terms of reference for the Higher Education Committee so that major issues arising from external examiners' reports and annual monitoring reports from awarding bodies are scrutinised and actions noted (paragraph 11)</li> </ul>	<p>Terms of reference for the HE Committee to be amended to include scrutiny of major issues arising from external examiner reports and action taken</p>	30 July 2010	Vice Principal for Quality and Curriculum	Terms of reference amended	HE Committee Academic Board	<p>Actions arising from external examiner reports are scrutinised and monitored for progress made and number and types of issues raised.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to ensure that the Higher Education Forum meets and that more effort is made to familiarise students with its existence and function (paragraph 13)</li> </ul>	<p>Higher Education Forums to be convened on a termly basis and timetabled to ensure maximum attendance of student</p>	<p>November 2010 February 2011 April 2011</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Manager/ Customer Liaison Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Termly Higher Education Forums convened with high attendance rates by student representatives</p>	HE Committee	<p>Student evaluations will be used as evidence that issues raised by student representatives at Higher Education Forums have</p>

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010						
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to enhance staff development opportunities specific to higher education (paragraph 33)</li> </ul>	<p>representatives</p> <p>A CPD plan for HE staff will be produced which includes needs identified from external examiner reports and staff surveys or other forms of feedback</p>	September 2010	Cross-College Curriculum Manager	<p>The plan is relevant to staff needs and reflects the Academic infrastructure. The plan is realistic, timely and cost-effective</p>	HE Committee	<p>been addressed</p> <p>The Cross-College Curriculum Manager will produce an evaluation of HE staff development undertaken in 2010/11 for the HE Committee and the Staff Development Committee</p>



City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010						
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to enhance its library provision for higher education in all programme areas (paragraph 35)</li> </ul>	<p>Establish library resources required for HE programmes by requesting lists from HE course organisers. Audit library stock to establish shortfall and the need for replacements. Request additional stocks of books to be purchased by the library. Review student access to appropriate online resources for each area</p>	30 July 2010	Cross-College Curriculum Manager/LRC Manager	Up to date and full lists of essential and desirable books and other learning resources identified for each HE programme. Current library and online resources identified. Additional books and learning resources, including online resources, available for September 2010	HE Committee	Student feedback reflects satisfaction with library and online resources

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 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>to ensure that the format of the College self-evaluation document is developed to more accurately reflect higher education by including, for example, external examiner reports, course organisers' reports and reports from the awarding bodies (paragraph 12)</li> </ul>	<p>Course SED and College SED to be revised to include specific sections on external examiner reports, course organisers' reports and reports from awarding bodies</p>	June 2010	Cross-College Curriculum Manager	SED documents are produced and completed by course organisers and Cross-College Curriculum Manager to deadline	HE Committee	HE Committee feedback on the revised formats reflects that the new formats are an improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to complete and approve its Higher Education Strategy (paragraph 14)</li> </ul>	The HE Strategy will be approved by the Corporation	July 2010	Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum	HE Strategy fully approved	HE Committee Academic Board	The strategy is implemented	

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to produce a document which identifies the quality cycle and reporting arrangements for the management of higher education that would enable staff to have a clear understanding of the process (paragraph 14)</li> </ul>	<p>The document will be produced and given to staff</p>	<p>30 July 2010</p>	<p>Vice Principal for Quality and Curriculum</p>	<p>The document produced is clear</p>	<p>HE Committee</p>	<p>Staff understand the quality cycle and the management arrangements for HE programmes at the college</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to develop clear guidance for staff and students about the ways in which student feedback is gathered, responded to and acted upon (paragraph 24)</li> </ul>	<p>Produce information for HE students and staff on the HE student feedback strategy and implementation plan</p>	<p>30 September 2010</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Manager/ Cross-College Curriculum Manager</p>	<p>The guidance produced is clear and covers the process for gathering feedback and how it is acted upon</p>	<p>HE Committee</p>	<p>Students and staff are clear about the process and how feedback will be responded to. This will be measured, for example, by feedback student representatives</p>

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to ensure that its Learning and Teaching Strategy and its observation of teaching make more reference to higher education (paragraph 28)</li> </ul>	Review the Learning and Teaching Strategy	30 July 2010	Vice-Principal for Communication, People and Development	Review completed	HE Committee Academic Board	Changes will be made to reflect the needs of higher education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to develop a formal approach to the continued development and enhancement of its virtual learning environment for use by its higher education staff and students (paragraph 36)</li> </ul>	Review the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the IT Strategy so that they more specifically include reference to the development of the use of the VLE for HE programmes	30 July 2010	Vice-Principal for Communication, People and Development	Any revisions are made and communicated to staff by September 2010	HE Committee Academic Board	The development and use of the VLE is formally monitored through the respective strategies

City College Coventry action plan relating to the Summative review: May 2010						
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to check the higher education information on the website and in the Higher Education Prospectus, including information on tuition fees (paragraph 40)</li> </ul>	<p>Thoroughly check the information on the college website and in the HE Prospectus to ensure it is accurate, complete and consistent with best practice. Put in place a strategy for regularly checking the information on the college website</p>	<p>June 2010</p>	<p>Student Services, Cross-College ILT PAM, Cross-College Curriculum Manager</p>	<p>The information available from all sources is accurate, complete and consistent with best practice. The information is regularly checked and any inaccuracies are corrected</p>	<p>HE Committee</p>	<p>Checks to show that the website and information in the HE Prospectus which is produced every year are accurate. Review the maintenance and management of website information if necessary</p>

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