QAA

Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

November 2009

Chelmsford College

SR50/2010

ISBN 978 1 84979 070 3
All QAA's publications are available on our website www.qaa.ac.uk
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

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 Chelmsford College carried out in November 2009

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 agreement, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding body. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreement, 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:

- regular and effective use is made of the University discipline network groups to enhance the College's own operation and understanding of higher education, as well as to share good practice with other consortium partners
- the College makes good use of its open and productive external relations for the benefit of academic and professional support staff, notably in dealing with its supportive awarding body and through its active engagement with regional groups
- the College has appointed a professional student adviser who is able to provide students with confidential and independent guidance, including that on University regulations for the extension of coursework submission dates.

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:

- provide some kind of forum or equivalent, specifically to reflect on higher education matters; this might promote, among other things, greater staff ownership and use of the Academic Infrastructure, and help to address the lack of specific higher education focus within existing systems and procedures
- ensure greater rigour in its internal procedures for checking and signing off published information
- liaise with the awarding body to confirm the relative responsibilities of both institutions for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the information published about the higher education programmes.

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

- explore with the University how it might make use of the rigorous external examiner reporting procedures to obtain feedback in sufficient detail to allow course teams to address issues and enhance the provision at the level of the individual awards

- recognise the implications of potential future growth in the higher education provision, by introducing more systematic arrangements for the recording and use of student feedback and ensuring that existing procedures for student representation are better implemented
- make use of its thorough and well-embedded teaching and learning observation scheme, to ensure that the observation sample includes an agreed proportion of higher education classes; the outcomes should be separately and routinely analysed, and be used to support enhancement.

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 Chelmsford College (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. The review was carried out by Mr Paul Chamberlain and Mr Mark Cooper (reviewers), and Mr David Lewis (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 body, meetings with staff, students and the partner institution, as well as reports from inspections by Ofsted. The College elected not to have a Developmental engagement as part of its engagement with IQER. It had this option because the HEFCE-funded higher education provision comprises less than 100 full-time equivalent students. 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 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 the Summative review report would normally summarise details of the Foundation Degree programmes delivered at the College. However, as the College does not offer any Foundation Degree programmes Section D of this report contains a statement to reflect this position.

4 Chelmsford College is a medium-sized general further education college, located in Essex and operating from three sites within the town. The College serves a relatively affluent area, although some pockets of deprivation exist in the centre of Chelmsford. A range of qualification levels is provided, from pre-entry to a small number of higher education programmes. During 2009, the College has had an inspection by Ofsted and an institutional review by its awarding body, Anglia Ruskin University. Both resulted in positive outcomes.

5 The College further education provision is broad, covering 14 of the Ofsted subject sector areas. It is managed through two academic centres, overseen by a Quality and Learning Directorate. The small higher education provision is managed within this general college framework, without any special arrangements. For 2009-10, the College has a total of 4,222 students, of which 130 are on higher education programmes. All of these are part-time and the enrolments amount to just over 58 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The College is part of a regional consortium of further education colleges aligned to Anglia Ruskin University. The higher education programmes that are funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England are listed below.

All are awarded by Anglia Ruskin University:

- Diploma in Teaching in the Life-Long Learning Sector (10.6 FTEs)
- HNC Civil Engineering (9.7 FTEs)
- HNC Construction (28 FTEs)

Partnership agreement with the awarding body

6 Since 2007, Anglia Ruskin University has been the awarding body for all of the higher education programmes delivered by the College. Each curriculum area in the College that offers higher education aligns with the relevant academic faculty of the University. The devolved responsibilities of the partnership agreement are limited in their range. They are clearly defined and listed by the College. The College responsibilities include the first marking of and assessment feedback on assignments, student admissions and guidance, and collecting and responding to student opinion. The University retains full control of curriculum design and the setting of assessments. The College, as all partner colleges, is required to adopt the University quality assurance procedures for the provision.

Recent developments in higher education at the College

7 The College Higher National awards were delivered with Edexcel as the awarding body until 2007, when a strategic decision was made to transfer them to the partnership with Anglia Ruskin University. The Diploma in Teaching in the Life-Long Learning Sector (the Diploma) was introduced at that time and had its first graduating cohort in June 2009. There are no immediate plans to expand the higher education portfolio, although the College is at an early stage of exploring the possibility of introducing Foundation Degrees for the public services. The College higher education strategy has been produced in draft form. It confirms that any future development of the higher education provision will be limited to existing curriculum areas and new niche markets.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

8 Students on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a written submission to the Summative review team. The submission, which was made available at the time of the review visit, represented just the views of students on the Diploma in Teaching in the Life-Long Learning Sector. The College supported the students by providing tutorial time for them to meet and a set of prompt questions as a framework for their response. The written submission provided a useful, if partial, summary of student views from both years of the programme. In addition, a representative group of current students from across the programmes offered valuable evidence in a meeting with the team.

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?

9 The College delivers its higher education programmes as part of a regional network, or consortium of colleges working with its awarding body, Anglia Ruskin University. The management responsibilities of the College for higher education standards are limited and clearly prescribed in the academic agreement with the University. Within the College, higher education is managed through the well-established general curriculum structures, without any specific formal higher education committees or groups. Curriculum teams are responsible to heads of department and heads of faculty, all operating under the overall management of the Directorate of Quality and Learning. A head of faculty takes on the role

of higher education coordinator for the provision. Curriculum team leaders manage the provision on a day-to-day basis, and have clear lines of contact, both formal and informal, with their counterpart faculties in the University. The College management arrangements are subject to the overarching quality assurance procedures of the University. College responsibilities are well understood and managed appropriately by senior staff and those teaching on the higher education programmes.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

10 The College has produced its higher education strategy in draft. The strategy reflects an awareness of the importance and application of the various elements of the Academic Infrastructure. However, the main mechanisms for ensuring that proper account is taken of the Infrastructure are those of the awarding body. Procedures for the approval of programmes, their assessment and quality assurance all rest with the University, which takes responsibility for referencing them to the FHEQ, *Code of practice* and, where appropriate, subject benchmark statements. Clear programme specifications are produced for College use in the form of pathway specification forms. The College also benefits from university-published materials, to support it in ensuring that the expectations of the *Code of practice* are met. These include a step-by-step guide to the assessment process.

11 College staff are diligent in following University procedures and thus ensuring that academic standards are maintained in the context of the Academic Infrastructure. They also benefit from participation in the discipline network groups, which are organised by the University. They provide opportunities for staff to reflect on higher education matters with colleagues from other colleges in the partnership. It is clear from documentary records that these groups consider a range of matters relating to the Academic Infrastructure and that the College benefits from its engagement with them. Overall, however, while staff are familiar with the Academic Infrastructure, there is little evidence to suggest that they feel a sense of ownership in respect of its application.

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?

12 The College publishes a comprehensive quality assurance manual for the use of staff. The manual confirms that higher education programmes are subject to the same annual procedures as the further education provision. These procedures are extensive and include self-assessment review, teaching observations, performance review boards and quality monitoring panels.

13 The quality assurance manual confirms that higher education assessment policy and practice are those of the awarding body. Staff are helped to keep up to date with the University regulations through meetings of the discipline network groups. Curriculum team leaders at the College are pivotal and effective in managing the University's quality procedures. They are supported in this process by regular links, formal and informal, with the relevant pathway leaders at the University.

14 Student assessment is acknowledged as being a key instrument in ensuring standards, and the University takes direct responsibility for setting all assessments. The College has responsibility for marking assignments and has robust procedures in place that include the use of second and joint marking. The University moderates the marked assignments to ensure that its procedures have been followed. This moderation also monitors that

standards are being maintained in line with the University expectations, the precepts of the *Code of practice, Section 6: Assessment of students*, and the FHEQ. The security of the assessment process is further supported by the involvement of the College staff in moderation and standardisation meetings, along with colleagues from the University and other partner colleges. A sample of assessed student work provided the team with verification that the College's role in assessment is functioning well and that standards are being maintained.

15 External examiners provide a further layer of security for ensuring that standards meet the requirements of the awarding body. They are appointed by the University to report on pathways across all colleges within the partnership network. The reports of external examiners give careful attention to standards, including differentiation between levels of student achievement. The College does not receive a report specific to its delivery of the programmes, although it does get moderation feedback based on the sampling of modules. Together, the generic reports and the moderation feedback offer limited information that is specific to teaching teams. It is desirable that the College explore with the University how the rigorous external examiner reporting procedures might provide the level of detail to allow course teams to address college-specific issues and enhance the delivery and standards of the provision.

16 The College enjoys an open and mutually responsive relationship with the University; this is strongly supported by the work of the Deputy Director of Quality and Learning. In addition to the clear formal reporting lines, the College staff take advantage of the small size of the provision and the responsiveness of the University to promote regular and additional communication between curriculum teams with their University academic counterparts. Students appreciate the effectiveness of this flexible and sometimes informal communication in ensuring the timely resolution of issues that arise on the programmes.

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

17 The College is responsible for the appointment and conduct of staff teaching on its higher education programmes. The University must approve the appointment, a process that contributes to ensuring academic standards. The College is expected to provide higher education staff development opportunities, including further study and research. It maintains comprehensive records of its staff development activity, although these do not allow the separate identification of activities relating specifically to higher education. The University makes a range of short general programmes available to the College staff, several of which relate to the *Code of practice*.

18 Staff attendance at the discipline network groups makes a significant contribution to professional development, allowing staff to discuss issues relating to academic standards with a wide group of colleagues from partner colleges within the Anglia Ruskin network. The minutes for the Diploma Network Group confirm the topics covered have included the standardisation of observation judgements and module grading.

19 The College staff development activities offer opportunities for individual advanced study, with one member of staff currently enrolled on a master's award. There is further potential for the College to support higher education standards through the promotion of research and scholarly activity.

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 body.

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?

20 The existing responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities are those described in paragraph 9 for academic standards. The College is introducing changes that have the potential to improve the current arrangements. From January 2010, the Faculty for Adult Learning will assume overall responsibility for the curriculum aspects of all higher education. In addition, following the institutional review by the University, a new Curriculum Management Committee is to be set up. The Committee will have reporting links into the College structures as well as to the University Partnerships Committee. Its remit will include the consideration of student feedback, the effectiveness of processes and procedures, and the general flow of information between the College and the awarding body.

21 While these developments are welcome, it is advisable that some kind of forum be established to provide a clearer focus for the discussion of higher education matters within the College. This might operate in support of the Curriculum Management Committee and promote, among other things, the more explicit ownership and use of the Academic Infrastructure by staff. It could also offer a vehicle for the discussion of a range of specific higher education matters, which are not differentiated or routinely debated within the existing College management mechanisms.

22 The College's participation in and use of the Anglia Ruskin University discipline network groups has had a positive impact on the quality of learning opportunities and is an area of good practice. For example, the Diploma Network Group cited the teaching practice mentor arrangements on the Diploma as worthy of being adopted by other partner colleges. A model of assessment feedback has also been shared with the University and other colleges within the network.

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

23 The academic agreement with Anglia Ruskin University clearly details the arrangements for the appointment and approval of teaching staff, resource provision, annual monitoring and staff development opportunities.

24 The College has a range of mechanisms through which it is able to assure itself that students receive appropriate learning opportunities. These include a robust quality assurance system and effective lines of communication with the University. These are described in paragraphs 12 to 16. The implementation of the University's quality assurance processes rests in practice with the College course team leaders, who relate directly and effectively to their faculty counterparts within the University.

25 Student feedback contributes to the monitoring of learning opportunities, as well as academic standards. Opinion is gathered and acted upon in a number of ways, including the college-wide student perception of course questionnaires, the University module feedback forms and informal meetings with staff. Outcomes are discussed at course and team level through programme review boards and team meetings. Module reviews are also analysed within the University. Students receive feedback on the actions taken, directly through tutors and by posters displayed around the College. However, while the mechanisms appear effective, the student perception questionnaire does not differentiate

the views of higher education learners. The University's institutional review of the College in November 2009 recommended the early implementation of a proposed plan to ensure that student feedback is more formally recorded. It is desirable that the College ensures that higher education student feedback, in all of its forms, is more systematically recorded and used. This will take on greater importance in the event of the College expanding its higher education provision.

26 University student handbooks identify the need for student representatives on programmes, and the College staff encourage this. In a meeting with the team, students confirmed that they did not have formal representatives, but felt no particular need for them.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

27 The means by which the College engages with the Academic Infrastructure are described in paragraphs 10 and 11. The requirements of the University ensure that programme delivery aligns with the precepts of the *Code of practice* regarding disability, assessment, programme monitoring and review, work-based learning, and admissions. Overall, in respect of learning opportunities, the provision appears to operate within the expectations of the Academic Infrastructure. However, there is little explicit reference to the Infrastructure in College-generated materials. It is not evident to the team that colleagues teaching on different awards within the College have the means to share experiences of using the Academic Infrastructure, including any good practice.

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

28 The College has a Head of Teaching and Learning Development, whose role is to improve the quality of teaching and learning across all levels of provision, and ensure implementation of the College's new Teaching and Learning Improvement Strategy. The Head of Teaching and Learning Development manages and works with advanced practitioners to coach and support curriculum teams. The reports of external examiners offer verification that teaching and learning is effective.

29 The College Quality Manual confirms that staff teaching on higher education programmes are subject to the procedures outlined for all staff in the Teaching and Learning Improvement Strategy. The teaching observation scheme is a rigorous and well-embedded instrument within the strategy. It is well organised and provides managers with a range of detailed and valuable data, which is used to inform the College's staff development priorities. The scheme offers the potential to identify and summarise specific higher education data, but does not routinely do so. The team deems it desirable that the College make better use of its teaching and learning observation scheme to support higher education. The observation sample might include an agreed proportion of higher education classes. It is also desirable that the observation outcomes for higher education should be separately and routinely analysed, and be used to support enhancement.

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

30 Higher education students are all in employment and those met by the team stressed the importance of having clear information and flexibility in relation to their support arrangements. New students follow a carefully structured general College induction programme. They express satisfaction with the programme, although it does not differentiate between the needs of further and higher education. Tutorial provision is

detailed in student handbooks; it includes small group and one-to-one sessions, and a named personal tutor. Diploma students have a set tutorial programme and are assigned a placement mentor. Higher National students have no set tutorials, but expressed appreciation of the responsiveness of tutors when there was need for support. The recent institutional review by Anglia Ruskin University commended the support provided by the College for its students.

31 The College has appointed a professional student adviser, whose role is to provide students with confidential and independent guidance on request. Importantly, students are referred to the adviser when seeking approval for extenuating circumstances in respect of coursework submission deadlines. The role of the adviser is judged to be good practice, in that it promotes the fair and consistent implementation of regulations, and removes potentially damaging negotiations from curriculum teams.

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

32 On appointment, new staff are assigned a mentor and undertake a thorough and detailed induction, which covers general college policies, procedures and operational systems. The induction does not include any content that is specific to higher education, but staff are able to obtain such guidance from University colleagues and those teaching on higher education programmes within the College.

33 Staff development is well supported by the College and the awarding body. The College has a clear and programmed approach to professional development. The participation level is high, although the emphasis, understandably, is largely focused on general and further education priorities. The University offers an additional range of well-publicised professional development opportunities. There is a high take-up of these opportunities, which are open to higher education staff who have been approved by the University.

34 College staff, both academic and those in professional support posts, make effective and widespread use of external contacts and opportunities to ensure currency and promote dialogue within their fields. These include attendance at University staff development events and the clear benefits gained from participation in the discipline network groups. A member of staff on the HNC Construction has attended the University over an extended period to shadow a colleague there and develop expertise in a new area of teaching. The activities of support staff include the participation of the student adviser in regional activities with partner college librarians. A higher education and careers adviser is regularly involved in activities of the Association of Colleges in the Eastern Region and has used these to promote and develop further expertise in relation to equality and diversity.

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?

35 The sufficiency of learning resources, both human and physical, is initially considered as part of the University's approval process. Subsequently, resources are routinely monitored as part of the College's annual monitoring procedures and the periodic institutional reviews conducted by the University. The most recent review, in November 2009, confirmed the suitability of general and specialist facilities. College students have access, including lending rights, at the University library.

36 The College provides the University with details of staff teaching on the higher

education programmes to confirm their suitability. The qualifications and experience of staff are appropriate for the level of awards. All have qualifications at a level higher than the awards on which they teach. One staff member teaches on the University's own delivery of the HNC programme. Students confirm that access to learning resources and materials is good, with Learning Centre advisers on hand to offer support and guidance.

37 Students have good access to the College intranet and electronic systems. They can also make use of the University's virtual learning environment, although some problems have been encountered with the logging-in procedure.

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?

38 The academic agreement with Anglia Ruskin University clearly states that College marketing should be coordinated through its nominated senior manager and within a framework agreed by the University. The College has limited management responsibility for published materials. It is provided with standardised promotional material, as well as generic programme and module handbooks. The agreement allows the College to amend the handbooks to incorporate college or subject-specific information. The team identified one example of the College failing to revise generic University text to ensure that it accurately reflected established practices within the programmes. This related to the initial screening of students described in the handbook for the Diploma.

39 The College has its own clear publications scheme. It is implemented and monitored by the Director of Client Services and the Head of Data and Communication Systems. Higher education programmes are advertised by the College through its prospectus, website and course leaflets. Curriculum teams, in liaison with their counterparts in the University, prepare the information for publication. The College's marketing department then completes artwork, typesetting and formatting to College and University standards prior to publication.

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?

40 The College publishes a communication guide for staff, which includes information on branding, consistent communication, public relations and press releases, presentations, public notice-boards and related matters. The guide makes little differentiation between the needs of further and higher education provision. The University supplies up-to-date promotional materials for its awards, including the crest and logotype.

41 The College publications scheme provides clearly laid out policies and procedures for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of published information. The effectiveness of the scheme requires that it should incorporate University requirements in respect of laid-down guidelines and protocols. In practice, there is uncertainty among key College staff about University procedures and the formal responsibilities within each institution. It is therefore advisable that the College should liaise with the awarding body to ensure that college

responsibilities are better understood and more securely implemented. This would reflect the expectations of the *Code of practice, Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)*.

42 The College publishes information about the higher education programmes in different areas of its website. The website is attractive and generally informative, although access to the information on higher education programmes is not immediately obvious. Although there are procedures in place for overseeing and signing off electronically published programme information, the team identified an omission in some of the website entries. The programme descriptions are clear and accurate, but fail to acknowledge the University in whose name the award is made. It is advisable that the College should ensure greater rigour in its procedures for checking and signing off published information. In this, it should ensure that the published information reflects the expectations of its awarding body and Section 2 of the *Code of practice*.

43 Students, in the written submission and in discussion with the team, expressed satisfaction with the accuracy and usefulness of the programme and module information they receive. It is not clear to the team how such feedback on published information is normally collected and used by the College.

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

44 As the total full-time equivalent students funded by HEFCE at the College is less than 100, in accordance with the published review method, the College elected not to take part in a Developmental engagement.

D Foundation Degrees

45 The College does not offer any Foundation Degrees.

E Conclusions and summary of judgements

46 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Chelmsford College'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 body. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding body, Anglia Ruskin University.

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

- regular and effective use is made of the University discipline network groups to enhance the College's own operation and understanding of higher education, as well as to share good practice with other consortium partners (paragraphs 11, 13, 18, 22, 34)
- the College uses its open and productive external relations for the benefit of academic and professional support staff, notably in dealing with its supportive awarding body and active engagement with regional groups (paragraphs 13, 16, 24, 34)

- a professional student adviser has been appointed, to provide students with confidential and independent guidance, including that on the University regulations for the extension of coursework submission dates (paragraphs 31, 34).

48 The team also makes some recommendations for consideration by the College and its awarding body.

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

- to provide some kind of forum or equivalent specifically to reflect on higher education matters; this might promote, among other things, greater staff ownership and use of the Academic Infrastructure, and help to address the lack of specific higher education focus within existing systems and procedures (paragraphs 11, 17, 21, 26, 27, 30, 32, 40)
- to ensure greater rigour in its internal procedures for checking and signing off published information (paragraphs 38, 42)
- to liaise with the awarding body to confirm the relative responsibilities of both institutions for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the information published about the higher education programmes (paragraph 41).

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

- to explore with the University how it might make use of the rigorous external examiner reporting procedures to obtain feedback in sufficient detail to allow course teams to address issues and enhance the provision at the level of the individual awards (paragraph 15)
- to recognise the implications of potential future growth in the higher education provision by introducing more systematic arrangements for the recording and use of student feedback and ensuring that existing procedures for student representation are better implemented (paragraphs 25, 26)
- to make use of its thorough and well-embedded teaching and learning observation scheme to ensure that the observation sample includes an agreed proportion of higher education classes; the outcomes should be separately and routinely analysed, and be used to support enhancement (paragraph 29).

51 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 body.

52 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.

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, 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.

Chelmsford College action plan relating to the Summative review: November 2009						
Good practice	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
• regular and effective use is made of the university Discipline Network Groups to enhance the College's own operation and understanding of higher education, as well as to share good practice with other consortium partners (paragraphs 11, 13, 18, 22, 34)	Minutes from DNG meetings to be brought to curriculum management committee for dissemination and discussion in order to facilitate good practice across disciplines	May 2010	Curriculum Team Leaders	Minutes reviewed and discussed	Quality Standards Committee	Evidence of improved consistency of practice across disciplines Self Assessment Report
• the College uses its open and productive external relations for the benefit of academic and professional support staff, notably in dealing with its supportive awarding body and	Continue to use the systems that are in place to benefit academic and professional support staff	Ongoing	Head of Higher Education at Chelmsford College	Staff are well informed of external impacts on HE and relative national/Anglia Ruskin University	Curriculum Management Committee	Self Assessment Report

Chelmsford College action plan relating to the Summative review: November 2009						
Good practice	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
active engagement with regional groups (paragraphs 13, 16, 24, 34)				(ARU) policies and procedures		
• a professional student adviser has been appointed, to provide students with confidential and independent guidance, including that on university regulations for the extension of coursework submission dates (paragraphs 31, 34).	Maintain the position of Professional Student Advisor (PSA) PSA to attend student advisor collaborative meetings at ARU to keep up to date and share best practice	Ongoing	ARU to ensure invitation to collaborative meetings PSA line manager to facilitate attendance at meetings	Maintain high level of service to HE students	Curriculum Management Committee	Self Assessment Report

Chelmsford College action plan relating to the Summative review: November 2009						
Advisable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team agreed a number of areas where the College should be **advised** to take action:						
• to provide some kind of forum or equivalent specifically to reflect on higher education matters; this might promote, among other things, greater staff ownership and use of the Academic Infrastructure, and help to address the lack of specific higher education focus within existing systems and procedures (paragraphs 11, 17, 21, 26, 27, 30, 32, 40)	Introduction of new ARU Curriculum Management Committee	May 2010	Head of Higher Education	Introduction of new curriculum management committee to facilitate greater staff ownership and use of Academic Infrastructure promote greater focus of HE within existing systems	Quality Standards Committee	Self Assessment Report
• to ensure greater rigour in its internal procedures for checking and signing off published information (paragraphs 38, 42)	Review and clarify protocols and procedures for checking and signing off published	June 2010	Director of Client Services and Head of Data and		Quality Standards	Review quality and accuracy of published information Self Assessment

Chelmsford College action plan relating to the Summative review: November 2009						
Advisable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
	information		Communication Systems			Report
• to liaise with the awarding body to confirm the relative responsibilities of both institutions for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the information published about the higher education programmes (paragraph 41).	Review of Academic Agreement to ensure relative responsibilities are transparent in relation to the accuracy and completeness of the published information	June 2010	Head of Quality Assurance at ARU Deputy Director, Quality and Learning at Chelmsford College	Clarity of respective responsibility as stated in the revised Academic Agreement	Curriculum Management Committee and Quality Standards Committee	Self Assessment Report

Chelmsford College action plan relating to the Summative review: November 2009						
Desirable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team agreed the following areas where it would be **desired** to take action:						
• to explore with the University how it might make use of the rigorous external examiner reporting procedures to obtain feedback in sufficient detail to allow course teams to address issues and enhance the provision at the level of the individual awards (paragraph 15)	ARU to review and emphasise with external examiners the responsibility they have with respect to collaborative provision Review content of DAP minutes to ensure sufficient details for the individual course teams to be able to address issues and enhance the provision at individual award level	Dec 2010	Head of Quality Assurance at AR Deputy Director, Quality and Learning at Chelmsford College	External examiners reports to contain sufficient detail relating to collaborative provision to be effective in allowing course teams to address issues at individual award level	Curriculum Management Meeting	DAP minutes External examiners reports Self Assessment Report

Chelmsford College action plan relating to the Summative review: November 2009						
Desirable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
• to recognise the implications of potential future growth in the higher education provision by introducing more systematic arrangements for the recording and use of student feedback and ensuring that existing procedures for student representation are better implemented (paragraphs 25, 26)	Review the Student Perception of Course (SPOC) to establish the practicalities of using an HE specific questionnaire Results of all HE student feedback from SPOC to be analysed together to produce a clear picture of the views of all HE learners HE student views to be reviewed at Curriculum Management Meeting	June 2010	Deputy Director, Quality and Learning Head of Higher Education Curriculum Team Leaders	Systems for recording and reviewing feedback from HE students are more systematic Student representation at appropriate meetings	Quality Standards Committee Curriculum Management Committee	Self Assessment Report

Chelmsford College action plan relating to the Summative review: November 2009						
Desirable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
	Invite formal student representation at appropriate meetings					
• to make use of its thorough and well-embedded teaching and learning observation scheme to ensure that the observation sample includes an agreed proportion of higher education classes; the outcomes should be separately and routinely analysed, and be used to support enhancement (paragraph 29).	Investigate the possibility of further developments to the Teaching and Learning Observation System (TaLOS) to allow for the specific analysis of HE lesson observations	June 2010	Deputy Director, Quality and Learning Systems Development Team	Ability to report and analyse HE observations Ability to produce action plans and associated professional development in relation to action points identified through HE observations	Quality Standards Committee	Quality Standards Committee

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
Southgate House
Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000
Fax 01452 557070
Email comms@qaa.ac.uk
Web www.qaa.ac.uk

RG 563 02/10