QAA

London School of Commerce & IT

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

February 2012

Key findings about London School of Commerce & IT

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in February 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of Edexcel, Association of Business Practitioners, Institute of Administrative Management, Association of Business Executives and London Centre of Marketing.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of this awarding body and organisations.

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

Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the high degree of student satisfaction as a direct result of effective feedback and the establishment of the Student Representative Committee (paragraph 1.5)
- easily accessible staff offering a high level of overall student support (paragraph 2.8)
- the initiative in further developing an entrepreneur group to foster and enhance the business activities of students provides excellent opportunities for students to enhance graduate employability skills (paragraph 2.12)
- the highly effective use of the display screen in reception to show developments in the School and its responses to issues raised by the students (paragraph 3.6).

Recommendations

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

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:

- design and implement clear procedures to ensure that the Academic Council monitors and reviews quality improvement plans on a regular and systematic basis (paragraph 1.2)
- implement a formal process to review self-assessment reports and academic staff questionnaires to ensure that evidence-based processes systematically address all elements of teaching, learning and assessment (paragraph 1.4)
- develop a system for regularly monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of communication with the awarding body and organisations at both strategic and operational levels (paragraph 1.9)
- develop a more structured and standardised process at programme team level for responding to external verifiers and examiners' reports and the monitoring of action plans (paragraph 1.11)
- further develop a clear assessment policy with appropriate guidance and training for staff (paragraph 1.12)

- enhance the capturing of the student voice by introducing a structured and consistent student module evaluation process within all programmes (paragraph 2.6)
- review access to resources to ensure that learning opportunities are not compromised (paragraph 2.11).

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

- appoint student representatives to all appropriate School committees (paragraph 1.5)
- continue to develop its understanding of external reference points and ensure that the Academic Infrastructure is more clearly embedded in its quality procedures (paragraph 2.4)
- review the need for a formal staff development programme and policy (paragraph 2.9)
- review the opportunities for staff to engage in peer observation to enable the sharing of good practice (paragraph 2.10)
- continue the development of the virtual learning environment and ensure that all staff are given sufficient support and training to enable them to provide minimum content as standard for all programmes (paragraph 3.3)
- fully embed the quality assurance system to the content, readability and accessibility of website and prospectus information, and involvement of students in this process (paragraph 3.7)
- ensure that all document management information is included on all policies and procedures to assure the currency of the information contained (paragraph 3.8).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at London School of Commerce & IT (the provider; the School). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of Edexcel, Association of Business Practitioners, Association of Business Executive, Institute of Administrative Management and London Centre of Marketing. The review was carried out by Mr Philip Davies, Ms Linda Keen, Ms Sue Miller (reviewers) and Dr Mark Mabey (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [*Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook*](#).[2] Evidence in support of the review included a wide range of documentation supplied by the provider and its awarding body and organisations, meetings with staff and students, and reports of reviews by the awarding body and organisations.

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

- Academic Infrastructure
- the awarding body and organisations' external verifiers and examiners
- the regulations of its awarding body and organisations.

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

In June 2003, Dr M N Khan and a group of academics founded The London School of Commerce and Technology. The aim of the organisation was to provide high quality business education to international and local students in London. To this end, the management began to utilise the skills and experience of its workforce to offer a wide range of UK accredited programmes to its students. In March 2008, the organisation reconstituted itself and was renamed London School of Commerce & IT. Since that date, the School has been committed to an ongoing self-appraisal and improvement process. Its guiding philosophy has been to update and expand its programmes, in line with UK government regulations, without compromising on quality. In July 2010, the School completed a move into spacious, newly refurbished premises in Greenfield Road to accommodate its student intake which has gradually expanded. Its students come mostly from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal, but it also has students from the Philippines, Vietnam, Brazil, Africa and Eastern Europe.

At the time of the review, the School offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding body and organisations:

Edexcel
- Higher National Diploma in Business
- Higher National Diploma in Computing and Systems Development

Association of Business Practitioners
- Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management

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[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx

Institute of Administrative Management
- Extended Diploma in Business and Administration Management

Association of Business Executives
- Graduate Integrated Diploma in Business Management

London Centre of Marketing
- Graduate Diploma in Business Management and Marketing

The provider's stated responsibilities

The School has limited responsibility for academic standards, with responsibility being retained by its awarding body and organisations, subject to the School's participation in the assessment processes of Edexcel. All awarding organisations and the awarding body have, however, delegated to the School responsibility for the quality of the higher education it provides.

Recent developments

In 2010 the School relocated to spacious, newly refurbished facilities offering a high quality student experience. It has discontinued a number of programmes and now only operates with those recognised by Ofqual, ensuring better progression opportunities for graduates. The School has recently gained approval to run nationally recognised teacher training programmes and is currently negotiating with a range of universities about master's and top-up degrees.

Students' contribution to the review

The student submission was compiled by the student representatives who attended the QAA briefing event and involved a number of focus groups with students from all programmes running at the School. The student counsellor took notes during the meetings and put together the final submission, which was circulated by the Student Representative Committee and endorsed by the students. The positive contributions and matters raised were further reinforced when the team met students at the School.

Detailed findings about London School of Commerce & IT

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The Principal is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of quality assurance systems and the Director of Studies has overall responsibility for all programme quality in conjunction with the Programme Board. The Director of Studies meets programme leaders and all lecturing staff before the beginning of the academic year to agree assessment schedule and quality standard issues and has particular responsibilities for liaising with the awarding body and organisations to ensure that their requirements are met.

1.2 The School introduced a revised quality management committee structure in June 2011. The Academic Council, chaired by the Principal, reports to the Board of Directors and holds overall responsibility for managing, delivering, monitoring and reviewing the achievement of academic standards across all programmes, and meets at least once every semester. Minutes take the form of completed Quality Improvement Plans which include academic and student support issues. The quality improvement plans draw upon the annual programme self-assessment reviews, but clear procedures are not currently in place. The team recommends that the School designs and implements clear procedures to ensure that the Academic Council monitors and reviews quality improvement plans on a regular and systematic basis.

1.3 The Programme Board reports to the Academic Council and is composed of programme leaders and lecturers from all programmes. It meets to discuss and agree action to be taken arising from the programme self-assessment reviews (SARs), which are produced annually for each programme using a standardised format. The Board also acts upon reports from the student evaluation questionnaires and the Student Representatives Committee.

1.4 Programme leaders are responsible for all quality issues, overall management of each programme team, and the production of an annual self-assessment review. They draw upon the annual academic staff questionnaire completed by all programme lecturers, although only a small segment of this questionnaire is concerned with academic standards; the extent to which programme lecturers are otherwise involved in these reviews is unclear. All reports analyse the strengths and weaknesses of programmes, using a standardised format, and actions required for improvement are identified. There is little specific reference to the awarding body and organisations' standards, and it is not clear how the self-assessment reports formally address the internal verifiers and external examiners' reports, student achievement of learning outcomes, or the requirements of the awarding body and organisations. One awarding partner report commented positively on the School's programme review procedures, while making some suggestions for further strengthening of the process. The Academic Council uses the self-assessment reports to draw up the quality improvement plans. The team recommends it as advisable that the School implements a formal process to review self-assessment reports and academic staff questionnaires to ensure that evidence-based processes systematically address all elements of teaching, learning and assessment.

1.5 The Student Representative Committee meets once a term to discuss any issues raised across programme areas. Student evaluation questionnaire results are passed on to the student representatives for comment, and discussed at the Committee. Specific issues and actions are considered by the Programme Board and Academic Council, although no

specific formal record of this is included in the minutes or agendas of these bodies apart from a brief reference to student views in some Programme Board meeting minutes. Further clarification is required about the formal structures and processes for reporting on, and responding to, the results of the student evaluation questionnaires and the Student Representatives Committee meetings. Although the process is in its infancy, students were highly complimentary of the involvement of the student voice. The team considers as good practice the high degree of student satisfaction as a direct result of effective feedback and the establishment of the Student Representative Committee. The team recommends it as desirable that student representatives are appointed to all programme and School committees.

1.6   The School has recently made significant progress in establishing clear and robust structures, processes and responsibilities for managing higher education standards. Self-assessment reports contain very positive comments about the new quality assurance policies and procedures, student representation system and evaluation questionnaires, and this was confirmed by the team. Staff recognised these initiatives as providing a very useful vehicle for staff and students to be involved in evaluating the effectiveness of their programmes, identifying problems, and proposing solutions. Students praised the new student representative and board system for giving them a welcome opportunity to be involved in the management of standards and make staff aware of their concerns.

1.7   There are some problems in relation to the design of the system, which are becoming apparent as they are implemented for the first time, resulting in a need for clarification and refinement of reporting relationships, and greater standardisation and consistency in practices across departments. The quality assurance manual requires some minor revisions to correct ambiguities and terminological errors which have emerged as the policies have developed during implementation.

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

1.8   The Academic Council in its consideration of the development of new external programmes, ensures that they relate to *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ), using a standardised programme selection checklist. The School makes effective use of the precepts and documentation of its awarding body and organisations as a basis for managing academic standards. Within the processes concerning quality management set by the awarding body and organisations, the School has designed systems to provide appropriate teaching, learning and assessment opportunities for the students.

1.9   Responsibility for communication with the awarding body and organisations is shared between the Director of Studies and programme leaders, although the precise demarcation of responsibilities is not clear. Some programmes' self-assessment reports indicate problems of communication with the awarding body and organisations and an impact on some learning outcomes. The main problem was with the Institute of Administrative Management Extended Diploma in Business Administration Management and the awarding organisation came to visit the students on the day of the review. However, a more formal system of monitoring and review needs to be developed. The School is closely monitoring the quality of support and programmes offered by its awarding body and organisations and will no longer offer programmes awarded by London Centre of Marketing because of a lack of progression opportunities. The team recommends as advisable that the School develops a system for regularly monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of communication with its awarding body and organisations at both strategic and operational levels.

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

1.10   The School emphasises the importance of relationships with its awarding body and organisations, including the external verification process and the external examiner process, and the awarding body and organisations' representatives are invited to attend student induction sessions**.** The Principal and senior management team attend all external verifiers' meetings to discuss their reports and ensure the implementation of any recommendations, although it is unclear how this process is formally monitored and reviewed. The two programmes which involve work assignments assessed by lecturers use the quality assurance procedures of the awarding body and organisations.

1.11   Programme leaders are responsible for processing external examiners and verifiers' reports of the awarding body and organisations through programme meetings. The Association of Business Practitioners' quality assurance and qualification reports praise the School's commitment to continuous self-improvement and demonstrate clearly that actions recommended from previous reports have been implemented fully. It is not clear how external verifiers and other awarding body and organisations' quality reports are formally considered by the School's committee structure. These processes take place informally during programme meetings. There is no standardised format across programmes for formal inclusion of external verifiers and examiners' reports on the agendas of meetings. The role of the Programme Board is unclear, and the annual programme review process does not include a specific section for noting external verifiers' reports**.** The team considers it advisable for the School to develop a more structured and standardised process at programme team level for responding to external verifiers and examiners' reports and the monitoring of action plans.

1.12   The School has developed an assessment strategy and this information is provided to students through the student handbook. It is not clear how strategic and operational information regarding the assessment process is transmitted to staff and some self-assessment reports comment on the need for a specific policy on assessment to be made available to staff and properly implemented. The team recommends it advisable that the School further develops a clear assessment policy with appropriate guidance and training for staff.

1.13   Submission procedures for assessed work are clearly described in student handbooks and the quality assurance manual, and involve a standard form used by students. The process includes software requirements to prevent plagiarism, late work submission procedures and penalties as well as procedures for special consideration of a student's extenuating circumstances. Some programme self-assessment reports indicate problems with implementing submission policies in some programmes. An achievement target has been set of 90 per cent of assignments to be submitted on time, together with plans for achieving this. Monitoring and review processes are in place.

1.14   A transcript of all marks is given to each student, which provides details of their performance on each module. There are robust processes for recording results for all programmes, and keeping them for five years. Discussions regularly take place on an informal basis within programme teams and teachers' meetings about the range of grades awarded for units/modules within and across programmes.

> The review team has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding body and organisations.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.1   The responsibilities for the quality of higher education learning opportunities are shared between the School and its awarding body and organisations. The division of responsibility is set out in the partnership agreements and the awarding body and organisations' regulations. Ultimate responsibility for the award rests with the awarding body and organisations, which delegate responsibility for management and delivery of programmes to the School. The quality of the teaching and learning opportunities is monitored through annual programme reviews and regular team meetings where programme and student progress is checked.

2.2   All programmes have student representatives, who are members of the Student Representative Committee which meets at least once a term. Student representatives are not members of the programme team and are not invited to programme team meetings. They are not members of the Academic Council or the Programme Board and do not have access to the minutes of the meetings. This limits student involvement in the School's decision-making processes. The team considers that this does not provide students with sufficient involvement in team decision-making and recommends that it would be advisable to invite student representatives to be members of the programme team meetings while still maintaining confidentiality where required.

2.3   The School produces self-assessment reports on each of its programmes. They are produced by the programme team and scrutinised and approved by the School. The self-assessment reports are not sufficiently evidence-based to enable them to assure the quality of the student learning experience. The annual monitoring process does not produce a clear programme action plan for the team to monitor throughout the year to ensure that the expectations of the awarding body and organisations are met. The team has found that this process could be more effective and recommends that the School reviews the evidence base for its SAR process and introduces clear team action plans as part of the annual programme review process.

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

2.4   The School makes limited use of the Academic Infrastructure to support the quality of learning opportunities. Programmes are validated by the relevant awarding body or organisation, using subject and award benchmark statements and referring to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*). School staff have access to the development opportunities provided by some awarding partners that include a limited consideration of the Academic Infrastructure. The team feels it desirable that the School continues to develop its understanding of external reference points and ensures that the Academic Infrastructure is more clearly embedded in its quality procedures.

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

2.5   The quality of teaching and learning is monitored through lesson observations conducted by the Principal, which are effective in checking the quality of teaching.

Observation feedback is collected and passed to the Academic Council, together with an annual report identifying strengths and areas for development. A report of good practice is circulated to staff and is used to inform staff development events.

2.6   There is a limited set of mechanisms for capturing the student voice that allow students to reflect on the quality of the teaching they receive. There are opportunities for students to comment on their teaching in programme surveys at the end of each semester and an end-of-year survey. Students value these opportunities and indicate that the School is responsive to their concerns. However, there is no student evaluation at the module or unit level and feedback on units is limited. The team recommends it as advisable for the School to enhance the capturing of the student voice by introducing a structured and consistent student module evaluation process within all programmes.

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

2.7   Students have an effective induction to their study and are supported personally and responsively by tutors and the Director of Administration. The induction is comprehensive and includes reference to the awarding body and organisations' procedures. The students would like to have more support for English language teaching and for careers advice.

2.8   The School has a well embedded range of support mechanisms for students. Students confirmed that the support mechanisms worked well and staff are very supportive, approachable and friendly. They appreciate the flexible access to staff for academic and pastoral support through the School's 'open door approach'. Students are well supported in their studies and agreed that the staff always had time for them. Academic tutors effectively support students in their academic studies and provide pastoral care as required. The easily accessible staff offering a high level of overall student support is felt to be an area of good practice.

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

2.9   A limited range of staff development opportunities is available to support the quality of learning opportunities. Staff are able to benefit from training given by the awarding body and organisations and there is good take-up of this. Staff meet the Principal to discuss training needs as part of their annual appraisal. The School does not have a clearly stated staff development policy to outline the aims and values of staff development and scholarly activity. It would be advantageous to clarify the role of staff development and identify entitlements of staff and the procedures to be followed when seeking approval. There is also no formal staff development programme. The team recommends that it would be desirable for the School to review the need for a staff development programme and policy.

2.10   All new staff are supported by an experienced member of staff, usually the programme leader. Peer observation is not part of the staff development system and the sharing of good practice is limited to observations made by the Principal, which is circulated to staff members. The team recommends as desirable that the School reviews the opportunities for staff to engage in peer observation to enable the sharing of good practice in both teaching and assessment processes.

How effectively does the provider ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes?

2.11   Resources are limited and in some cases students find it difficult to achieve their learning outcomes. Students thought that the numbers of higher education books in the library were limited in number and the opening hours of the library too restrictive. Students praised the virtual learning environment as a useful repository of programme handbooks and other material. However, some could not access the material on the virtual learning environment for technical reasons and some social media websites were blocked. There were not enough computer terminals and software. This affected achievement rates. The School has stated that it plans to provide more learning resources. The team considers it advisable that the School reviews access to resources to ensure that learning opportunities are not compromised.

2.12   The School provides a range of curriculum-enhancing activities that are highly valued by the students. Students voiced the opinion that this had a valuable impact on their learning opportunities and extended the scope of a full higher education learning experience. The School is in the process of further developing an entrepreneur group to foster and enhance the business activities of students. The team considers that this initiative provided opportunities for students to enhance their graduate employability skills and is a clear example of good practice.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

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3   Public information

How effectively does the provider's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?

3.1   The primary medium for communication with prospective students is the School's website. It was redesigned in 2010, and includes information on the School, its mission, facilities, and programmes, together with information on applications and visas for overseas students, and general information on living in London. The website is easy to navigate and the information clearly stated, although some pages are too full. Links are provided to the awarding body and organisations' websites where additional information on programmes is available. Students commented favourably on the accuracy, breadth and usefulness of the information provided before their enrolment.

3.2   The prospectus is available in hard copy and in downloadable format from the website. It provides details of the School, its mission and facilities, as well as the programmes offered, entrance requirements and progression opportunities. Further information is provided on the application and visa processes, and on living in London. The prospectus provides an appropriate range of information drawn from the website.

3.3   The School currently publishes e-learning resources on its virtual learning environment providing programme and assessment materials, reading lists, and general School information. A more advanced portal for this is being developed in-house. Staff and students reported positively on their use of email to maintain contact between formal sessions. The School plans to incorporate facilities for group discussion forums into the

e-portal, which will further enhance the flow of information. The team recommends it as desirable that the School continues the development of the virtual learning environment and ensures that all staff are given sufficient support and training to enable them to provide minimum content as standard for all programmes.

3.4   Students are provided with a range of printed information during induction. This includes a student handbook, induction pack, and programme-specific information, some of which is provided by the awarding body and organisations. Module information is introduced at the start of each module and students confirmed that tutors take care to ensure that they fully understand the information presented.

3.5   The senior management team provides staff with a handbook and a quality manual. The quality manual includes the policies and procedures required to deliver and administer the programmes. Both manuals are available electronically and staff are notified of any changes or amendments by email. Students are provided with copies of policies and procedures, which the School plans to review annually.

3.6   Notice boards around the premises and a display screen in reception are used to display information for students and staff. They are well maintained and provide current information clearly. The display screen has a prominent position and content is changed regularly. A particularly effective example of its use is to show developments in the School and its responses to issues raised by the students, and the team acknowledges this as a feature of good practice. The system of 'you said we did' is effective, such as the request for more computing facilities which led to the purchase of a number of new computers. Leaflets detailing local library facilities, use of the British Library, and other sources of study material and support were freely available on the campus.

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

3.7   The senior management team has carried out quality assurance of the information provided on the website and in the prospectus and handbooks. They have noted that spelling and grammar errors have sometimes been introduced during the printing process and are taking action to avoid this. However, specific programme titles in the prospectus are not always consistent, which may prove misleading to prospective students. A recent update to the quality assurance process for public information includes more proofreading and evaluation by students and others. The team recommends that the School fully embeds the quality assurance system to the content, readability and accessibility of website and prospectus information and involvement of students in this process.

3.8   The School publishes policies and procedures in a range of documents, including the staff and student handbooks and quality manual. They are reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Staff are notified of changes via email and the most recent versions are available online. The review team recommends that the School ensures all document management information is included on all policies and procedures to assure the currency of the information contained.

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

Action plan[3]

London School of Commerce & IT action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight February 2012						
Good practice	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The review team identified the following areas of **good practice** that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
• the high degree of student satisfaction as a direct result of effective feedback and the establishment of the Student Representative Committee (paragraph 1.5)	Continue to hold student representative meetings at least once per term Continue to schedule course board and academic council meetings swiftly after student representative meetings in order to discuss issues raised by students as soon as possible	April 2012 ongoing	Principal	Increased student satisfaction	Academic Council	Academic Council Annual Review Student questionnaire
	Clearly document issues raised by students and actions taken by academic council and course board in a quality	April 2012 ongoing	Principal	All issues raised are fully addressed resulting in improved college management and	Academic Council	Academic Council Annual Review Student questionnaire

[3] The provider has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the provider's awarding body and organisations.

	improvement plan Review quality improvement plan every 2 months			increased student and staff satisfaction		Course Self Assessment Reviews Staff questionnaire
	Continue to keep students informed of responses to issues raised promptly by means of emails, verbal reporting and display screen	April 2012 ongoing	Principal/Admin Assistant	Students feel that their voice is listened to resulting in increased satisfaction	Academic Council	Student questionnaire
	Appoint student representatives to all programme and School committees	April 2012 ongoing	Principal	Increase students involvement in college decision-making resulting in increased satisfaction and improved decision-making	Academic Council	Student questionnaire Academic Council Annual Review
• easily accessible staff offering a high level of overall student support (paragraph 2.8)	Continue to appoint staff with suitable personal attributes and motivation	April 2012 ongoing	Director of Studies	Students continue to feel supported in all areas of student life	Academic Council	Student Questionnaire Academic Council Annual Review
	Make teaching staff aware of the impact of their contribution at staff meetings and appraisals	April 2012 ongoing	Principal	Increased staff satisfaction	Academic Council	Staff Questionnaire
	Tutorial workshop	April 2012	Principal	Knowledge sharing to improve quality of	Academic Council	Student Questionnaire

	Continue to schedule drop in tutorials and hold extra seminar classes when requested by students	March 2012 ongoing	Director of Studies	student support Increase level of student support when needed	Academic Council	Student questionnaire course results
• the initiative in further developing an entrepreneur group to foster and enhance the business activities of students provides excellent opportunities for students to enhance graduate employability skills (paragraph 2.12)	Lead Entrepreneurship tutor to draw up plans for developing entrepreneurial group	April 2012	Lead Entrepreneurship tutor	Increased student motivation and graduate employability	Academic Council	Student questionnaire Course results
	Scope of administrative and financial support will be determined	April 2012 ongoing	Lead Entrepreneurship tutor/Chief Executive/Director of Administration	Improvement and extension of group's activities		Student destination records
	Broadcast details of seminars etc via TV in reception	April 2012 ongoing	Lead Entrepreneurship tutor/Admin Assistant	Students are made aware of the entrepreneurship group and its activities and are able to become involved in networking activities		
	Develop entrepreneurs website	June 2012 ongoing	Lead Entrepreneurship tutor			
• the highly effective use of the display screen in reception to show developments in the School and its	Continue to display current information of interest and relevance to staff and students	March 2012	Admin Assistant	Better communication within college	Academic Council	Student questionnaire Staff questionnaire

responses to issues raised by the students (paragraph 3.6).	Admin Assistant to monitor and design power point displays for use on display screen Admin Assistant to liaise with staff and students to decide content and form of displays					Academic Council Annual Review
Advisable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:						
• design and implement clear procedures to ensure that the Academic Council monitors and reviews quality improvement plans on a regular and systematic basis (paragraph 1.2)	Quality improvement plans to be reviewed by Academic Council every two months and minutes taken of all meetings	March 2012 ongoing	Principal	Ensures that all issues raised are addressed resulting in improved management and greater staff and student satisfaction	Academic Council	Academic Council Annual Review Staff and student questionnaire
• implement a formal process to review self-assessment reports and academic staff questionnaires to ensure that evidence-based	Self Assessment Review forms and staff questionnaire forms will be redesigned to reflect academic standards including awarding body standards,	April 2012	Principal	Improved standards of teaching learning and assessment	Academic Council	Internal Verifer and External Verifier reports Academic Council Annual Review

processes systematically address all elements of teaching, learning and assessment (paragraph 1.4)	internal verifiers and external examiners' reports and student achievement A standardised procedure whereby the course leader meets with lecturers on his/her team to draw up the Self Assessment Review annually will be designed and implemented	April 2012	Director Of Studies			Staff and student questionnaires
• develop a system for regularly monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of communication with the awarding body and organisations at both strategic and operational levels (paragraph 1.9)	Regular meetings between course teams and awarding body representatives will be scheduled throughout the academic year Effectiveness of communication with awarding bodies will be evaluated by lecturers on the annual staff review questionnaire	April 2012	Course Coordinator	Improved communication between teaching staff and awarding bodies	Academic Council	External verifier reports Academic Council Annual Review Staff and student questionnaires
• develop a more structured and standardised process at	A course meeting will be called as soon as possible after an external verifiers	April 2012	Director Of Studies/Course Leaders	Improved delivery of all courses	Academic Council	External verifiers reports Annual Self Assessment

programme team level for responding to external verifiers and examiners' reports and the monitoring of action plans (paragraph 1.11)	report is received Course leader to discuss issues raised with team, Director of Studies and Principal Quality Improvement Plans will be formulated to address problem areas Quality Improvement Plans progress to be monitored every two months			Improved achievement levels on all courses		Review Academic Council Annual Review
• further develop a clear assessment policy with appropriate guidance and training for staff (paragraph 1.12)	Extend and clarify existing assessment policy Devise appropriate training session for all staff with course leaders	June 2012	Director of Studies	Improved standards of assessment Uniformity of assessment Assessments marked and returned to students more quickly	Academic Council	External verifier and internal verifier reports Staff and student questionnaires Annual Self Assessment Review Academic Council Annual Review
• enhance the capturing of the student voice by introducing a structured and consistent student	Introduce student evaluation questionnaire on completion of each discrete module	April 2012	Director of Studies/Course Leaders	Ability to quickly intervene when problems are identified in course module delivery	Academic Council	Student questionnaires Annual Self Assessment Review

	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
module evaluation process within all programmes (paragraph 2.6)						
• review access to resources to ensure that learning opportunities are not compromised (paragraph 2.11).	Course leader will liaise with teaching staff and advise at commencement of semester what resources are necessary for adequate delivery of all courses	April 2012 ongoing	Course Leaders/Principal	Improved achievement levels Increased staff and student satisfaction levels	Academic Council	Internal verifier and external verifier reports Achievement levels Staff and student questionnaires
	Necessary resources will be purchased	April 2012 ongoing	Chief Executive Officer			
	Problems of access to virtual learning environment will be investigated and remedied	April 2012	Virtual learning environment developers			
	Library opening hours to be extended	April 2012	Chief Executive Officer			
Desirable	**Action to be taken**	**Target date**	**Action by**	**Success indicators**	**Reported to**	**Evaluation**
The team considers that it is **desirable** for the provider to:						
• appoint student representatives to all appropriate School committees (paragraph 1.5)	Student representatives will be present on all course board and academic council meetings	April 2012 ongoing	Principal	Increased student satisfaction	Academic Council	Student questionnaires Annual Self Assessment Review Academic Council Annual Review

• continue to develop its understanding of external reference points and ensure that the Academic Infrastructure is more clearly embedded in its quality procedures (paragraph 2.4)	Start to cross-reference academic infrastructure to all new processes and procedures to ensure best practices Deliver continuous professional development on the Academic Infrastructure to new and existing managers and teaching staff Assess implications of changes to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and ensure that all staff are made aware of changes	April 2012 ongoing	Principal Director of Studies Principal Director of Studies Director of Administration Principal Director of Studies Director of Administration	Staff feedback External examiner reports Achievement levels	Academic Council	Annual Self Assessment Review Academic Council Annual Review External examiner feedback
• review the need for a formal staff development programme and policy (paragraph 2.9)	A formal staff development programme and policy will be drawn up in consultation with course leaders	April 2012	Director of Studies/Principal/ Course leaders	Increased staff satisfaction and retention Increased student satisfaction Improved achievement rates	Academic Council	Staff and student questionnaires Course results External verifier reports
• review the opportunities for staff to engage in peer observation to enable	Teaching staff will consult with Principal and respective course leader to	April 2012 ongoing	Director Of Studies/Principal/ Course leaders/ Teaching staff	Improved standards of teaching and assessment	Academic Council	Staff questionnaires Student

the sharing of good practice (paragraph 2.10)	decide who they wish to observe Support will be given to teaching staff to enable them to observe chosen teacher Teaching staff undertake to observe another teacher each semester Teachers will circulate a report of their observations to all teaching staff Principal will circulate a register of good practice to all teaching staff					questionnaires Course results
• continue the development of the virtual learning environment and ensure that all staff are given sufficient support and training to enable them to provide minimum content as standard for all programmes (paragraph 3.3)	Course leaders and Director of Studies to consult with virtual learning environment developers and design improvements to existing virtual learning environment Course leaders will consult with teaching staff to determine what support and	April 2012 April 2012	Course leaders Director of Studies/ virtual learning environment developers Course leaders Teaching	Increased and improved use of virtual learning environment Increased student satisfaction Increased academic	Academic Council	Student questionnaire Staff questionnaire External verifier reports Course results Annual Self Assessment Review

	training is necessary		Staff/Director Of Studies	achievement		
	Students representatives will advise on student training requirements	April 2012	Student representatives			
	A training programme will be designed	May 2012	Director of Studies/Virtual Learning environment developers			
	Training programme delivered to teaching staff and students	May 2012 ongoing	Virtual learning environment developers			
• fully embed the quality assurance system to the content, readability and accessibility of website and prospectus information, and involvement of students in this process (paragraph 3.7)	The public information procedure will be fully implemented	April 2012	Chief Executive Officer Director of Admissions Principal	Increased student satisfaction	Academic Council	Student questionnaire Recruitment levels
	Student volunteers will be involved in proofreading website and prospectus information	May 2012 ongoing	Student volunteers Higher National Diploma computing students Student volunteers/Principal Higher National Diploma computing	Improved recruitment levels		Annual Self Assessment Review
	Higher National Diploma Computing & Systems students will evaluate college					
	website with guidance of teaching staff		students and teaching staff			

	Website developer will enable website users to evaluate site interactively		Website developer			
• ensure that all document management information is included on all policies and procedures to assure the currency of the information contained (paragraph 3.8).	Director of Administration to make a list of all current policies and procedures Public information policies and procedures will be applied to all existing documentation	May 2012 ongoing	Director of Administration Chief Executive Officer Director of Administration Principal	All information published by London School of Commerce & IT is accurate and complete	Academic Council	Student questionnaires

About QAA

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

QAA's aims are to:

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

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

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

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/tier-4.

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at:
www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the
Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook[4]

Academic Infrastructure Guidance developed and agreed by the higher education
community and published by QAA, which is used by institutions to ensure that their
programmes meet national expectations for academic standards and that students have
access to a suitable environment for learning (academic quality). It consists of four groups of
reference points: the **frameworks for higher education qualifications**, the **subject
benchmark statements**, the **programme specifications** and the **Code of practice**. Work
is underway (2011-12) to revise the Academic Infrastructure as the UK Quality Code for
Higher Education.

academic quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, institutions
manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards The standards set and maintained by institutions for their programmes
and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

awarding body A body with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the
framework for higher education qualifications, such as diplomas or degrees.

awarding organisation An organisation with the authority to award academic qualifications
located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework for England and Northern Ireland (these
qualifications are at levels one to eight, with levels four and above being classed as 'higher
education').

Code of practice *The Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards
in higher education*, published by QAA: a set of interrelated documents giving guidance for
higher education institutions.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed to perform a particular
function.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements
respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

enhancement Taking deliberate steps at institutional level to improve the quality of **learning
opportunities**. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

feature of good practice A positive aspect of the way a higher education institution
manages quality and standards, which may be seen as exemplary to others.

framework A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education
qualifications**.

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies
a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected
of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education
providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks:

[4] www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and *The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland*.

highly trusted sponsor An education provider that the UK government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

learning opportunities The provision made for students' learning, including planned **programmes of study**, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios) and staff development.

learning outcome What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

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

programme (of study) An approved programmes of study which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

programme specifications Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **programmes of study**, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

provider An institution that offers programmes of higher education, typically on behalf of a separate **awarding body or organisation**. In the context of REO, the term means an independent college.

public information Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

quality See **academic quality**.

subject benchmark statement A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

threshold academic standard The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications frameworks. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

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