



# **Educational Programmes Abroad**

## **Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight**

**Review by the Quality Assurance Agency  
for Higher Education**

April 2012

## About this report

This is a report of a review under the Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Educational Programmes Abroad, London. The review took place on 20 April 2012 and was conducted by a panel, as follows:

- Professor Peter Bush
- Mr Alan Hunt
- Ms Mary Rivers.

The main purpose of the review was to:

- make judgements about the provider's delegated responsibilities for the management of academic standards and the quality and enhancement of learning opportunities
- draw a conclusion about whether the provider's public information is reliable
- report on any features of good practice
- make recommendations for action.

A summary of the [key findings](#) can be found in the section starting on page 3. The [context](#) in which these findings should be interpreted is explained on page 3. [Explanations](#) of the findings are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 5.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission.<sup>1</sup> More information about this review method can be found in the [published handbook](#).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/pages/default.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/pages/default.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/eo-recognition-scheme.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/eo-recognition-scheme.aspx)

## Key findings

The QAA panel considered evidence relating to the educational provision at Educational Programmes Abroad (EPA), both information supplied in advance and evidence gathered during the visits of the review itself. The review has resulted in the key findings stated in this section.

## Judgements

The QAA panel formed the following judgements about Educational Programmes Abroad:

- **confidence** can be placed in Educational Programmes Abroad's management of its responsibilities for academic standards
- **confidence** can be placed in Educational Programmes Abroad's management of its responsibilities for the quality of learning opportunities.

## Conclusion about public information

The QAA panel concluded that:

- **reliance can** be placed on the public information that Educational Programmes Abroad supplies about itself.

## Good practice

The QAA panel identified the following **features of good practice** at Educational Programmes Abroad:

- the provision of proactive pastoral support by Programme Directors (paragraph 2.9)
- integrated arrangements with the University of Rochester for student admissions (paragraph 3.3).

## Recommendations

The QAA panel makes the following recommendations to Educational Programmes Abroad.

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

- collate current management and administrative practice and documentation into a manual for the use of present and future staff (paragraph 1.2)
- maintain records of selection and due diligence processes for all partner institutions and agents (paragraph 1.5)
- ensure that all academic partnerships and agency arrangements are covered by appropriate formal agreements which specify the responsibilities of each party, taking account of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)* (paragraph 1.5)
- ensure that updated syllabuses of courses provided by EPA in London and Edinburgh are deposited with EPA's US office and with schools of record (paragraph 1.7)
- introduce the use of an online plagiarism detection system in the assessment of EPA-provided courses (paragraph 1.7)

## Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: Educational Programmes Abroad

- make systematic use of student feedback in the monitoring of all taught courses in London and Edinburgh, and in this connection, make the end-of-programme student questionnaire survey a normal requirement (paragraph 2.10)
- systematically check the websites of client institutions and agents to confirm the accuracy of any information about EPA and its provision (paragraph 3.1).

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

- maintain records of management deliberations and decision making (paragraph 1.2)
- consider introducing a mid-programme student questionnaire survey similar to the end-of-programme survey (paragraph 2.10).

## Context

Educational Programmes Abroad Ltd (EPA) is a not-for-profit company, based in London but also registered in the US as EPA Incorporated (EPA Inc). It provides study abroad and internship programmes for foreign higher education institutions, which it refers to as 'client institutions' and 'sponsoring institutions', mainly in the USA and India. It offers these programmes in London and Edinburgh. It also offers internship programmes in Berlin, Bonn, Brussels and Madrid. These study abroad programmes contribute credit to the awards of US universities and colleges. This report addresses the EPA provision in London (EPA London) and Edinburgh (EPA Edinburgh).

EPA's key provider of study programmes in London during the autumn and spring semesters is the University of Westminster, and at Edinburgh by Napier University. Summer programmes in London and Edinburgh are provided directly by EPA, which employs UK academics for this purpose.

EPA's role is 'to facilitate client university study programmes; to liaise with client institutions in the US and India, and with its key UK partners Westminster University and Napier University; to arrange the students' work placements and accommodation; to provide welfare and guidance support; and to ensure that grades, reports, assessments and students' relevant written assignments are returned as required to the client university'.

EPA hosts an average of 20 students per semester in London, from a small number of US universities and colleges. It also organises study programmes for small numbers of students from the School of Architecture at the University of Pune, India, in the autumn semester.

EPA Edinburgh issues Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) letters only for students in its summer school, where the average student number is five. This review's consideration of EPA Edinburgh focused only on this summer school provision.

EPA's US partner institutions are accredited in the USA. Awards of accredited USA institutions are recognised by the UK NARIC as valid with a recognised level of equivalence with UK awards. The reference points used in the setting of academic standards are those of the US accrediting bodies which accredit EPA's partner universities and colleges.

EPA is accredited by the British Accreditation Council (BAC), which issued its most recent accreditation report in September 2010. EPA confirmed that it has addressed the recommendations of this and the 2008 BAC report.

## Detailed findings

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The EPA office in London is run by a group of three staff, the Executive Director, the London Programme Director and the Assistant London Programme Director, who liaise with the US and India institutions and the University of Westminster, manage the internship programmes, and provide support for the students. The Edinburgh operation is run by a Programme Director who has similar responsibilities and who works with Napier University. The panel learned that the London and Edinburgh offices collaborate as appropriate, but that they are essentially independent operations. All the staff apart from the Executive Director, who founded EPA in 1972, are on fractional contracts, although they work flexibly to ensure that the needs of the students and the various stages of the Study Abroad Programme (SAP) are appropriately covered. EPA, through EPA Inc, operates an office in Rochester, New York State, on the campus of the University of Rochester, which coordinates student admissions and communicates on academic matters with the US clients on behalf of the EPA offices in Europe. EPA's developing operations in India (see paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4) are coordinated through an agency, Viv's International Education Centre Pty Ltd (VIEC).

1.2 EPA has operated largely through informal processes in its London and Edinburgh offices and through close working with client organisations, internship providers and UK academic partners, and has developed practice and case-law through the accumulated experience of operating SAP for 35 years. While EPA has developed in a 'lightly regulated' study abroad environment, it now intends to embrace a more formal approach to the documentation of processes and records of decision making to enhance the programmes further, in order to meet the challenges of more formal external regulation and a more competitive SAP market. In the light of these external factors and to reduce the impact of staff changes on a small organisation, the panel advises EPA to collate current management and administrative practice and documentation into a manual for the use of present and future staff. For similar reasons the panel also concluded that it would be desirable for EPA to maintain records of management deliberations and decision making.

1.3 The SAPs organised by EPA provide opportunities to study in London or Edinburgh during either an autumn or spring semester or during a seven-week summer programme. EPA's roles are: to arrange, on behalf of its 'client' universities or colleges in the USA and India, courses of study at the University of Westminster (UW) and Napier University (NU) during the autumn and spring semesters; find and manage internships; support students while in London or Edinburgh; and provide short courses during summer programmes. During the two semesters students take two modules at UW or at NU as appropriate. In addition, each student undertakes a formal placement, or internship, for 21 hours per week over a three-day period during their programme. UW and NU are responsible for the academic standards of the modules which they provide. The short courses EPA arranges directly in London and Edinburgh during the summer semester are approved by the University of Rochester, EPA's principal partner institution in the USA, whose approval is accepted by other client institutions. Internships are arranged directly by EPA but the academic standards of this provision, and specifically of its assessment, are the responsibility of the 'sending' client institution. Students can earn 16 credits in a semester programme (four from each of the two modules and six from the internship) or eight credits in the summer programme (two from the short course provided by EPA and six from the internship). Students receive credit directly from their home institutions or through credit transfer agreements with either the University of Rochester (UR) or the University of

Northern Illinois (UNI). EPA's relationships with its client universities and colleges are secured through inter-institutional contracts.

1.4 EPA's website lists some 75 US and two Canadian institutions from whom it has received students since 1976. EPA satisfies itself about the accreditation status of its US partners either through UR or informal networks. However, as it continues to develop its due diligence system, EPA is advised to maintain a formal register of its client institutions and their accreditation status. EPA's relationship with UR is governed by an informal agreement which has been codified through correspondence which sets out the key responsibilities of the two organisations as they have developed over a number of years. A formal agreement defines the relationship with UNI; it is renewable through the annual exchanges of letters. There is currently a letter of agreement, rather than a formal contract, with the University of Pune; although EPA's relationship with VIEC is reflected in a formal contract.

1.5 The panel found that EPA's various relationships and their respective responsibilities were outlined in these documents, summarised in chart form and are well understood. Operation of these agreements, formal and informal, relied in part on the excellent working relationships between the various parties. However, to provide added security to the operation of EPA, and to safeguard its interests and those of future students, the panel recommends as advisable that all current and future academic partnerships and agency arrangements are fully covered by appropriate formal agreements which specify the responsibilities of each party, taking account of the *Code of practice, Section 2*. Moreover, as EPA moves towards a more regulated SAP environment, the panel advises it to maintain records of partner and agent selection and due diligence processes.

1.6 Until 2011, the semester courses in London were offered through New York University in London (NYU), but NYU withdrew this provision for non-NYU students. Following a review of a number of possible organisations in London to replace NYU, EPA selected UW as it offered a wide range of course (module) options which fitted the requirements of EPA's client institutions, as well as access to a wide range of computing, library and student support facilities, and a dedicated study abroad office, which is the main point of contact for EPA staff. Additionally, EPA had previous experience of UW through arranging the provision of courses on behalf of Pune University. EPA and UW 'share responsibility for the standards of the academic provision', but UW is responsible for academic standards in these courses, which are subject to its normal quality assurance policies, regulations and procedures. Students' 'home' universities approve the courses and receive the grades awarded by UW. Under a formal partnership agreement between EPA and UW, the latter collates all grade records through its Education Abroad Office which submits these to EPA's office at UR for onward transmission to the students' home institutions. The US institutions approve the UW courses selected by students; in practice, UR normally acts as the 'approving body' on behalf of US client institutions which acknowledge its approval of courses, or transfers credit to them. UR confirmed that it had 'reviewed the course offerings' (at UW) and found the standards acceptable for the award of four UR credits. UNI acts in this regard for courses in subjects which UR does not provide. UR approves individual course choices by each student as part of the application process. These relationships mirror similar arrangements between the Edinburgh EPA office, EPA's client institutions in the USA, and NU, which took over the provision of SAP courses from the University of Edinburgh in 2008. Pune University similarly agreed the UW courses in its March 2012 letter to EPA.

1.7 EPA provides a credit-bearing short course for the summer programme in London and two such courses at Edinburgh, both being taught by experienced UK academics who produce appropriate programme documentation and update the course content to maintain currency. Courses, and the staff teaching them, were originally approved by UR, but the UK academics were not required to submit changes to EPA or UR for approval. EPA provides

an effective framework for the home institutions to assure standards, but it is advised to ensure that updated syllabuses of courses provided by EPA in London and Edinburgh are deposited, before they are delivered, with EPA's US office and with the schools of record. Additionally, the panel recommends as advisable the early introduction of an online plagiarism detection system for the assessment of EPA-provided courses.

1.8 EPA is responsible for arranging appropriate high-quality internships and for monitoring the effectiveness of supervisory arrangements and the students' placement experiences (see paragraph 2.1). Credit is awarded by US institutions on the basis of an internship supervisor evaluation and an academic journal prepared by the student to a specification determined by the home institution and submitted by the student directly to their study abroad tutor. Students from Pune University have specific requirements defined by their Architecture School, including supervisor evaluation and a work portfolio. The standards of the internship are thus set and monitored by the students' home institutions.

1.9 Building on experience gained over a number of years working with its US client institutions, EPA operates an entry requirement of a GPA of 3.0 or above, although admission of US students to the SAP is 'entirely in the hands of the credit-granting university'. EPA becomes involved in the selection process only if it has difficulty in finding an appropriate internship placement. Whether intending to study in London or Edinburgh, students apply either through their home university, having gained approval for their study programme from their 'home' academic department, or through UR with the prior approval of their home university. The admissions process is handled directly by EPA's Rochester office. Students confirmed the efficiency of these arrangements. Students from India joining the autumn semester in London are recruited through VIEC and will have attended a 'reputable and well established university', although UW formally considers their applications in the light of entry criteria laid out in the 2010 agreement between EPA and UW.

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

1.10 US client institutions and Pune are subject to their national accreditation arrangements, and their requirements for maintaining academic standards. In selecting UW and NU for the delivery of the semester modules, EPA had confidence that standards there are set and maintained through these universities' alignments with the UK Academic Infrastructure.

### **How effectively does the provider use external scrutiny of assessment processes to assure academic standards (where applicable)?**

1.11 Courses at UW and NU are subject to their own quality assurance arrangements which involve external examining according to their own regulations and procedures, which are themselves subject to regular scrutiny by QAA. Academic standards of EPA courses arranged for summer programmes are assured by UR in the US accreditation system which does not require the use of external examining.

The panel has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the awards to be conferred by its awarding organisations



## 2 Quality of learning opportunities

### **How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities?**

2.1 EPA is responsible for the selection and administration of internships and for maintaining the quality of the placement provision. Learning outcomes and the assessment of internships are the responsibility of the student's home institution (see paragraph 1.6). EPA measures the success of a placement by the extent to which students have 'an invaluable experience which enriches their academic and professional future'. Programme Directors work with placement providers and students to ensure that internships meet the students' expectations, while encouraging student independence and initiative. Programme Directors in Edinburgh and London had developed very close working relationships with internship providers, particularly focusing on parliamentary and health-related opportunities, and were developing new opportunities in sectors such as banking.

2.2 The EPA offices in London and Edinburgh are responsible for ensuring that UW and NU meet their contractual obligations to EPA students and provide learning resources and other facilities as agreed. Formal evaluations of this provision are carried out by students through the course monitoring arrangements of UW and NU, in which EPA was not directly involved, though it would become aware of negative feedback through its contact with the head of UW's Study Abroad Office (SAO) and the equivalent at NU.

2.3 EPA manages the learning opportunities offered during the summer programmes (paragraph 1.5) through the appointment of staff, the procurement of teaching accommodation, and regular communications with lecturers. Any deficiencies in teaching accommodation are reported directly by the lecturers to EPA staff who follow up issues with Birkbeck College and NU.

### **How effectively are external reference points used in monitoring and evaluation processes?**

2.4 EPA indicated its familiarity with and use of the *Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*. The panel found that, on the whole, the relevant precepts in this section of the *Code of practice* was reflected in EPA's management of internships. More generally, EPA had successfully reviewed its arrangements against the best practice code produced by the Association of International Educators (NAFSA).

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

2.5 EPA Programme Directors monitor internship placements through workplace visits, student feedback (usually informal) and interviews with supervisors. Most students reported very high levels of satisfaction with their internships. Examples of internship site visit reports, which used standard forms, summarised the nature of the work, reported comments from the student and supervisor, and noted comments from the students about wider aspects of the SAP such as accommodation, orientation arrangements, cultural visits, and experiences of their academic programmes. Programme Directors maintained contact with students and supervisors in the event of any problems and endeavoured to resolve these informally and as quickly as possible. If necessary EPA would organise a change of placement. In the past difficulties had arisen in connection with the English language skills of some students, but EPA had made arrangements for students whose first language was not English to be interviewed by Rochester staff, with a report to the Edinburgh or London offices, so that support arrangements could be made before the student arrived in the UK.

2.6 Within the context of the arrangements described in paragraph 2.2, EPA staff were confident that students would draw to their attention any issues arising from their learning experiences at UW and NU. This view was confirmed by students met by the panel: issues which they had raised with EPA had been followed up promptly through the regular contacts between the London Programme Director and the Head of UW's SAO, and had been addressed.

2.7 The UK academics who delivered courses in the summer programmes maintained a continuous dialogue with students, and reported any issues to EPA, though the panel learned that this had not been necessary so far. Students had a more formal opportunity to report on issues during internship site visits (paragraph 2.5). Nevertheless, as with the UW and NU provided courses, EPA staff were confident that its informal and frequent interactions with students (see paragraph 2.9) provided them with sufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of learning opportunities.

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

2.8 All EPA programmes are characterised by a very committed and effective approach to student support. EPA offices in London and Edinburgh provide or facilitate a comprehensive range of support services in addition to those available to the students at UW and NU. Students from RU have direct access to EPA's office in Rochester for pre-departure information, and EPA's websites (see section 3) offer a range of information about the summer programmes. Students endorsed the value of this information, particularly praising the Pre-Departure Handbook which included a welcome letter and information on internships, housing, travel, finance, and arrival arrangements. A companion Orientation Student Handbook, issued to all students on arrival in the UK, provided home and office contact details of EPA staff and other helpful telephone numbers/websites. It gave information on living in London, cultural acclimatisation, internship expectations, health and safety matters, and cultural activities, and it was well received by the students. The Edinburgh office worked closely with EPA London to produce similar handbooks customised for the Edinburgh and Scotland experience. The Orientation Handbook also includes a complaints form; students were aware of this but had felt it unnecessary to use as EPA staff were available by mobile phone on a 24/7 basis for advice and problem resolution. Induction arrangements consisted of a one-day briefing with EPA staff, who also accompanied the students to orientation programmes provided by UW.

2.9 EPA staff are responsible for finding appropriate housing for the students, either in student flats or with families. Students were content with these arrangements which they found convenient and supportive; they felt able to raise directly with EPA staff any accommodation concerns they had which were usually swiftly resolved. EPA staff quickly became aware of the needs and concerns of their students, whom they met frequently and informally in the office, during internship visits, through electronic communications, and often over meals. The panel noted as a feature of good practice the proactive pastoral support provided for students by Programme Directors.

2.10 Students met by the panel felt it unnecessary to have a student committee and/or student representatives because EPA staff were approachable and open to students' views whenever necessary. They also had access to the formal complaints procedures at UW and NU. Both the Edinburgh and London offices issued comprehensive end-of-programme questionnaires, but response rates were low. However, EPA London staff attached great importance to feedback received from students at the end-of-programme dinner attended by all staff and students. Informality also characterised the feedback mechanisms obtained by the staff in relation to the Summer School programmes and from staff at UW and NU. The panel concluded that these informal arrangements provided only an incomplete

framework for monitoring the SAP as a whole, and could run the risk of missing issues which might appear unremarkable individually but which together might point to the need for remedy or enhancement. To assist it in securing more systematic, structured and comprehensive evaluations of their students' experiences, EPA is advised to make the end-of-programme student questionnaire survey a normal requirement. It is desirable that EPA should also consider introducing a mid-programme survey of this kind.

**How effective are the provider's arrangements for staff development in relation to maintaining and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?**

2.11 EPA is responsible for the development of its own core staff. London EPA staff have had ample opportunities to attend relevant sectoral events, such as those arranged by NAFSA, although most of their professional development was effected through familiarity with professional websites and informal networking within the study abroad community. Responsibility for the development of academic staff working for EPA's UK partners rested with those institutions. EPA was confident that the academics who taught its summer programmes engaged in scholarship and professional updating, and the professor met by the panel confirmed this.

**How effectively does the provider ensure that students have access to learning resources that are sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes of their programmes?**

2.12 EPA staff in London and Edinburgh ensure that appropriate learning infrastructures and resources are in place to support the summer programmes (paragraphs 1.5, 2.3 and 2.7). The provision of learning resources in UW and NU is agreed in their contracts with EPA, and is reviewed as necessary in discussions between EPA staff and their institutional contacts (paragraphs 2.2 and 2.6). EPA students have the same rights of access to all learning resources, including library and IT provision, as all other students registered at UW and NU, and this access was confirmed by the London students.

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

### **3 Public information**

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

3.1 EPA and its overseas partners have dual responsibility for the publication of information to students and other stakeholders, and the Edinburgh and London staff were clear about their responsibilities in this regard. Client institutions hold general information about the SAPs, and their study abroad coordinators use EPA websites as the primary source of information to their students. The Rochester office of EPA was an additional source of detailed information. The VIEC office in Delhi was the key source of additional information for students applying from India. Some client institutions' websites provided information about EPA programmes, but the panel observed that in some cases this was not easily found. The panel recommends as advisable that EPA systematically checks the websites of client institutions and agents to confirm the accuracy of any information about EPA and its provision.

3.2 EPA websites appeared to the panel to be accurate and comprehensive. There was information about EPA and the SAPs in general, and more detailed information on the London and Edinburgh programmes, particularly the internships. This included dates and fee levels, and information on UW and NU including links to course details on the UW and NU websites. Outline information on London and Edinburgh was also included, and contact details for EPA's London, Edinburgh and Rochester offices. EPA is encouraged to review the accuracy of the section of the website listing those 'institutions which have participated in past internships' to ensure the accuracy of institutional titles.

3.3 Students met by the panel confirmed the accuracy of the information available on EPA websites, and reported that their home institutions were well informed about EPA's programme offerings. They also reported that EPA's pre-arrival and orientation guides, and especially the information regarding their placements, were informative, accurate and helpful. While all students confirmed that pre-SAP information was accurate and reflected their experiences to date, a number said that their experiences had exceeded their initial expectations. Students from UR were particularly appreciative of the support they had received from the EPA Rochester office, particularly during the admissions process, and described the relationship between UR and EPA Rochester as 'integrated'. Indeed, in the light of UR's roles in the approval of courses at UW and NU as a credit awarding and transferring body, and its very smooth and efficient relationship with EPA's Rochester office, the panel noted as a feature of good practice the integrated operational arrangements, particularly for student admissions, between University of Rochester and EPA.

The panel 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.

## 4 Action plan

Educational Programmes Abroad action plan relating to the Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight April 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The panel identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provision of proactive pastoral support by Programme Directors (paragraph 2.9)</li> </ul>	Develop and incentivise where appropriate this good practice throughout the Educational Programmes Abroad provisions	Ongoing	Executive Director working with programme directors	Improved student feedback, student uptake, quality of provisions and programme operating efficiencies	Executive Director	Discuss successes and failures at the end of semester meetings and develop feedback from programme directors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated arrangements with the University of Rochester for student admissions (paragraph 3.3)</li> </ul>	<p>When appropriate, consider greater integration of admissions and other services with client institutions</p> <p>For example, if in the future an institution sends a similar number of students as University of Rochester on a regular basis,</p>	Ongoing	Executive Director and client institutions	<p>If deemed necessary to implement, success indicators would include creation of similar arrangements</p> <p>Students are assured that their academic experience on the Educational</p>	Executive Director and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education	<p>Discuss the need for such provisions at the end of semester meetings and continually update</p> <p>If the Executive Director deems necessary create integrated arrangements with other institutions, then</p>

	integrated arrangements may provide greater efficiencies and improve the quality of the programme			Programmes Abroad programme is better tailored to their degree and studies		consider implementing those arrangements
<b>Advisable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The panel considers that it is <b>advisable</b> for the Provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collate current management and administrative practice and documentation into a manual for the use of present and future staff (paragraph 1.2)</li> </ul>	<p>Prepare manual of the working practices of Educational Programmes Abroad to be used by present and future staff</p> <p>Include examples of action to be taken in specific circumstances</p>	<p>First draft December 2012</p> <p>Final Draft Easter 2013</p>	<p>London and Edinburgh programme directors</p> <p>Executive Director</p>	<p>Manual is concise and useful and is of value to present and future employees</p> <p>Enables effective continuity of the programme provisions, reducing the potential loss of quality resulting from changes in the organisation structure</p>	<p>Executive Director</p>	<p>Discuss the manual at the end of semester meetings and continually update</p> <p>Incorporate suggestions from third party inspectors such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintain records of selection and due diligence processes for all partner institutions and agents (paragraph 1.5)</li> </ul>	Create a code of practice document outline the method and criteria for selection of agents and partners with details regarding US	December 2012	<p>Executive Director</p> <p>(working with Educational Programmes Abroad</p>	Third parties and agents/partners better understand our selection criteria and expectations	Executive Director	Evaluate whether future agents and partners meet our requirements and criteria and rejecting them in the case that they

	and India national accreditation and recognition		Incorporated and Indian partners/agents)			do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that all academic partnerships and agency arrangements are covered by appropriate formal agreements which specify the responsibilities of each party, taking account of the <i>Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning) (paragraph 1.5)</i></li> </ul>	<p>Update existing formal agreements to meet obligations under the <i>Code of practice</i></p> <p>Ensure all future agreements conform to the <i>Code of practice</i></p>	<p>Easter 2013</p> <p>Implement immediately</p>	<p>Executive Director</p> <p>Working with Educational Programmes Abroad Incorporated in the relation to client institutions in the US</p>	<p>Agreements updated and specify accurately the responsibilities of each party taking into account the <i>Code of practice</i></p> <p>All future agreements comply with this</p>	<p>Executive Director, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education</p>	<p>Work with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education to ensure that the agreements meet the <i>Code of practice</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that updated syllabuses of courses provided by Educational Programmes Abroad in London and Edinburgh are</li> </ul>	<p>Syllabuses distributed to Educational Programmes Abroad Incorporated and deposited with schools of record</p>	<p>Autumn 2012</p>	<p>London and Edinburgh programme directors</p>	<p>Accurate information available to students both at the Educational Programmes Abroad</p>	<p>Executive Director</p>	<p>Report of progress and any problems with information at home universities in end-of-semester report</p>

deposited with the US office and with schools of record (paragraph 1.7)				Incorporated office and the home university study abroad office		and evaluated by Executive Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduce the use of an online plagiarism detection system in the assessment of EPA-provided courses (paragraph 1.7)</li> </ul>	<p>Identify, purchase/acquire an online plagiarism detection system</p> <p>Train summer semester professors in Edinburgh and London on how to use system</p> <p>Require a report on use by the professors</p>	Beginning summer 2013	<p>London and Edinburgh programme directors</p> <p>summer programme course professors</p>	<p>Ensure that there is a fully functioning system in place before start of summer semester</p> <p>Reports demonstrating the professors have used the system and any results</p>	Executive Director	Report of the plagiarism system included in end-of-semester report and evaluated by Executive Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make systematic use of student feedback in the monitoring of all taught courses in London and Edinburgh, and in this connection, make the end-of-programme student questionnaire survey a normal requirement (paragraph 2.10)</li> </ul>	<p>Administer end-of-semester questionnaire at farewell dinner</p> <p>Collate information received and create a report highlighting any trends in student concerns or praise</p>	<p>Already in place</p> <p>End of autumn 2012</p>	London and Edinburgh programme directors	<p>Receive student evaluations from all students</p> <p>Use report to improve areas of the programme and address student concerns</p>	Executive Director	Evaluate trends and improvement of programme as part of end of semester reviews with Executive Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>systematically check the websites of client</li> </ul>	Educational Programmes Abroad	To start immediately	Educational Programmes	Lower incidences of student's	Executive Director	Evaluate the accuracy of



institutions and agents to confirm the accuracy of any information about EPA and its provision (paragraph 3.1)	<p>Incorporated working with Educational Programmes Abroad London and Edinburgh check on a semi-regular basis that the information is accurate and helpful</p> <p>Create report on accuracy and actions taken to remedy it</p> <p>Educational Programmes Abroad Incorporated taking actions to inform home offices of any inaccuracies as well as ensuring that course syllabi are included on university websites</p>	End of autumn 2012	Abroad Incorporated Director with assistance from the London and Edinburgh programme directors	<p>reporting they have received inaccurate information</p> <p>Higher correspondence between what the student expect and what the programme delivers</p>		programme as part of end of semester reviews with Executive Director
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The panel considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintain records of management deliberations and decision making (paragraph 1.2)</li> </ul>	Open file and minute all meetings decisions in a central location	Start immediately	Executive Director, London and Edinburgh programme directors	Maintain minutes and records of deliberations and decision making of sufficient breadth and detail	Executive Director	Annual programme management review conducted by Executive Director

				to allow for proper analysis of management processes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consider introducing a mid-programme student questionnaire survey similar to the end-of-programme survey (paragraph 2.10).</li> </ul>	<p>Currently integrated into the mid-term site visit conducted by the Educational Programmes Abroad programme directors</p> <p>Create system to collate information into a report</p> <p>Should include conclusions from the site visits and follow-up action for use by management and future inspections</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>August 2012</p>	<p>London and Edinburgh programme directors</p>	<p>Integration into a report and demonstration of use to improve the quality of the programme</p>	<p>Executive Director</p>	<p>Evaluate trends and improvement of programme as part of end of semester reviews with Executive Director</p>

## Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to key terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. For more details see the [handbook](#)<sup>3</sup> for this review method.

If you require formal definitions of other terms please refer to the section on assuring standards and quality:

[www.qaa.ac.uk/assuringstandardsandquality/pages/default.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuringstandardsandquality/pages/default.aspx).

User-friendly explanations of a wide range of terms can be found in the longer **Glossary** on the QAA website: [www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary/pages/default.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary/pages/default.aspx).

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

**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.

**credit(s)** A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education programmes of study, expressed as 'numbers of credits' at a specific level.

**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.

**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.

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

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

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

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<sup>3</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/eo-recognition-scheme.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/eo-recognition-scheme.aspx)

**RG 923 07/12**

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© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2012

ISBN 978 1 84979 574 6

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Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786