QAA

UK College of Business and Computing Ltd

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

May 2012

Key findings about UK College of Business and Computing Ltd

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in May 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 the Association of Business Practitioners, the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants and Edexcel.

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 these awarding 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**:

- effective use is made of a well-designed system for the independent collection and analysis of student feedback questionnaires (paragraph 1.5)
- the initiation of a peer observation of teaching and learning scheme provides a vehicle for developing innovative teaching (paragraph 2.12).

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:

- formalise and clarify the operation and structure of its academic committees to maintain a transparent organisational process (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.3).

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

- formally map its policies to relevant external reference points, such as the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, to provide clearer evidence of their alignment to them (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.4)
- clarify the purpose and operation of its teaching and learning observation schemes (paragraph 2.12)
- make details of specific registration and examination fees payable to the awarding body and organisations more explicit on the website (paragraph 3.2)
- include more information on the nature of the awarding body and organisations to provide clearer information for prospective students (paragraph 3.2)
- review and clarify the published College policy on late submission of assignments to improve the consistency of treatment of students (paragraph 3.4).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)[1] (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the UK College of Business and Computing Ltd (the provider; the College). 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, the Association of Business Practitioners and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. The review was carried out by Mr Seth Crofts, Mr Siva Kumar Dinavahi, Mrs Daphne Rowlands (reviewers), and Dr Chris Amodio (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 the awarding body and organisations' agreements, quality assurance documents, policies, handbooks and minutes of meetings supplied by the provider, together with meetings with staff, representatives of the awarding body and organisations, and students.

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

- Qualifications and Credit Framework
- relevant National Occupational Standards
- subject benchmark statements
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*)
- the awarding body and organisations' requirements and regulations.

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

The UK College of Business and Computing Ltd (the College) is a well established private institution, set up in 2001 with a mission to maintain high educational standards by providing inspirational education and training leading to a diversity of opportunities. It is registered with the Accreditation Service for International Colleges and is currently recognised as a Highly Trusted Sponsor by the UK Border Agency. It has been associated with various awarding organisations over the last few years, with appropriate quality standards to meet the requirements of these organisations.

The College is located at Gants Hill, near the Essex/Greater London border. Its main campus, where all teaching and learning is currently delivered, is at Wentworth House, with a second campus nearby at Lords House. At the time of the review, there are about 580 students enrolled at the College. This number can change during an academic year, as there are three entry dates during this period.

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

Edexcel
- Level 4/5 Higher National Certificate/Diploma: Business
- Level 4/5 Higher National Certificate/Diploma: Computing and Systems Development

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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.

- Level 4/5 Higher National Certificate/Diploma: Travel and Tourism Management
- Level 7 Extended Postgraduate Diploma: Strategic Management and Leadership

Association of Business Practitioners
- Level 7 Extended Postgraduate Diploma: Information Systems
- Level 7 Extended Postgraduate Diploma: Strategic Management and Leadership in Health and Social Care

Association of Certified Chartered Accountants
- Levels 4-6 Fundments Level Programme: F1-F9
- Level 7 Professional Level Programme: P1-P7

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College currently works with one awarding body and two awarding organisations which approve its higher education programmes. It is an approved centre to offer Edexcel's BTEC qualifications, an Approved Learning Partner - Student Tuition of the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants, and has had its listed programmes accredited by the Association of Business Practitioners. It is also accredited by the Accreditation Service for International Colleges. The awarding body and organisations determine the intended learning outcomes, indicative content and assessment guidelines for each programme. In addition, the College designs learning materials and manages the delivery of the programmes. In the case of the Association of Business Practitioners and Edexcel, the College designs, organises and verifies assessments internally before external verification by the awarding body and organisation. Assessments of the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants are externally set and usually externally administered. The College is responsible for managing the quality of its provision, as laid down in the regulations and ordinances of its awarding body and organisations.

Recent developments

The College is in the process of developing a second campus, about 10 minutes' walk from the main one at Gants Hill. This will have more classrooms, a counselling room, additional laboratory for information technology, and a main hall. It is the intention of the College management to establish collaborative partnerships with appropriate public sector higher education institutions in the near future. During the current academic year, the College was given gold approval status by the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. This was submitted following a meeting with student representatives, facilitated by College administrative staff, from each level of study for all higher education programmes. Key issues were discussed within each of the core themes of the review. The resulting submission, which took the form of written and video contributions, reflected the topics discussed and views expressed. It formed a useful contribution to the review. At the preparatory meeting, the coordinator explained the Review of Educational Oversight process to student representatives, emphasising their role in it. In addition, the team had the opportunity to meet a representative group of 20 students and discuss the provision with them during the review visit.

Detailed findings about UK College of Business and Computing Ltd

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College has a strategic plan, including a mission statement and core values, which provides a suitable guide for future development. There are clear aims and objectives, which are understood by staff at all levels of the provision and provide a framework for the College's operational delivery. The team identified a highly collaborative approach by both academic and administrative staff, who work closely together to promote effective management of academic standards.

1.2 There is a clear and effective organisational structure that ensures strong leadership for both administrative and academic functions within the College. The Principal has an overall leadership role in relation to both areas, and provides strong direction in respect of all issues relating to the management of standards and student experience. The Director of Studies performs a key function in relation to coordinating the operational delivery of programmes of study, whereas the Principal focuses upon the strategic aspects of the academic experience. These key posts perform complementary functions that are well understood and appreciated by staff and students.

1.3 The College is at an early stage of embedding a revised committee structure to ensure that appropriate deliberations take place in relation to academic standards. The structure includes course committees, a course management committee and a quality assurance committee. Course committee meetings include a review of student performance and discussion in relation to student achievement. These meetings receive external verifiers' reports and other communications from validating organisations.

1.4 Some of these groups are very recently established and have very informal arrangements in relation to terms of reference and the recording of their outcomes through formal minutes. This poses some challenges in relation to recording and monitoring decisions. It is important that the College formalises the operation of its deliberative structures, and keeps formal records of committee meetings. On occasion, there has been some ambiguity in respect of the titles and roles of different committees; for example, the terms 'team meeting' and 'course committee' are used interchangeably. Although the team was satisfied that effective and relevant deliberations are taking place, it considers it to be advisable for the College to formalise and clarify the operation and structure of its academic committees to maintain a transparent organisational process.

1.5 The College employs formal and informal processes to obtain the views of students to enhance academic standards and the quality of provision. In addition to student representatives being members of course committees, student feedback is collected through module evaluation questionnaires, which are administered and collated independently of academic staff. The team regards the use made of this well-designed system for the independent collection and analysis of student feedback questionnaires to be good practice.

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

1.6 College staff have a well-developed understanding of external reference points. Academic staff have a good knowledge of the subject benchmark statements for their

discipline areas and these are consistently applied to course delivery and assessment. There is also extensive reference to the application of level descriptors. Discussions between the College and representatives of its awarding body and organisations include consideration of external reference points.

1.7 Academic staff have a broad overall understanding of the *Code of practice* and more detailed knowledge of its individual sections. They apply this informally to their operations, although a formal mapping exercise has not been completed. The management team demonstrated that it is able to use this awareness to shape the policies within the College and to develop strategies for managing academic standards. For example, the Admissions Policy has been developed with direct reference to the *Code of practice, Section 10: Admissions to higher education*.

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

1.8 Policies have been developed to manage assessment, including those for assignment submission, internal verification and student appeals. The College has significant responsibilities for managing academic standards in terms of marking and internal verification, as set out by the awarding body and organisations' delegated responsibilities. The internal verification process is central to the College's monitoring of student performance and achievement. The College's procedures for internal verification are robust, consistent and clearly understood by the academic staff across all areas. Verifiers' reports are considered at departmental level and then presented to course committees and other deliberative structures within the College. The team found that internal verification works effectively.

1.9 The annual monitoring process outlines the way in which course leaders review their programmes and ensure that aims and learning outcomes are met. An external verification report protocol outlines the process for dealing with external verification reports. Following receipt of an external verifier's report, an agreed action plan is written, to which all lecturers on the course agree. The awarding body and organisations confirmed that the standard of assessment is good and that all action points are dealt with in a timely manner.

1.10 Representatives of the awarding body and organisations who met the team confirmed that the College effectively maintains and enhances academic standards as appropriate. The College has an extremely productive relationship with its awarding body and organisations. There is an active dialogue between their representatives and key members of the academic staff in relation to the ongoing development of programme delivery, interaction with external benchmarks and monitoring. These processes are carefully managed by the Director of Studies.

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.

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2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 Responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities are carried out effectively. Overall responsibility for ensuring appropriate provision of learning opportunities lies with the Director of the College. Operational responsibility is

devolved to the Director of Studies who reports to the Principal. The Director of Studies supervises departmental heads who are responsible for the day-to-day academic content of their courses.

2.2 A clear quality management organisational diagram illustrates the information flow and separation of responsibilities. The newly formed course management committee meets twice each year and comprises academic and administrative personnel to monitor the overall progress of the courses. The committee structure shows an upward flow of information from course teams through to the Director of Studies, with issues concerning the quality of learning opportunities being discussed in academic meetings now known as course committees.

2.3 The Quality Assurance Coordinator oversees the quality processes that ensure the appropriateness of learning opportunities. The newly-introduced Quality Assurance Committee consists of the Director of Studies, Principal, College Director and Finance Manager. The Committee meets informally every six months, but does not yet minute its meetings. A course committee comprising academic representatives of all courses and student representatives meets regularly to monitor and review course progress.

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

2.4 External reference points are used effectively to manage and enhance learning opportunities. Policies are informally aligned to the relevant precepts, although there is no formal mapping procedure and policies are not dated. The quality process, assessment strategy and the policy for the recruitment of students have guidelines which mirror the relevant sections of the *Code of practice*. Specifically, admissions procedures are particularly clear and robust, and follow the *Code of practice* guidelines. Although it is apparent that its policies and procedures clearly reflect the relevant external benchmarks, the team considers it desirable for the College to formally map its policies to relevant external reference points, such as the *Code of practice*, to provide clearer evidence of this alignment.

2.5 Unit specifications are provided by the relevant awarding body or organisation. Assessment briefs for these specifications are designed to follow a standardised template, which incorporates subject or occupational benchmarks and Qualifications and Credit Framework levels. Programme specifications are provided for each programme and follow QAA's guidelines. For example, programme specifications for the Higher National Diploma in Business clearly set out the aims of the programme, as well as learning outcomes, underpinning knowledge and skills.

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

2.6 There is a comprehensive teaching and learning strategy, which outlines procedures to be followed and provides effective guidelines on planning and delivering the curriculum. It also outlines the expectations staff should have of students. Lesson plans and schemes of work are required to be provided for each session. All lesson plans are sent to the Director of Studies for approval before being used. The guidelines also include principles for teaching, which encourage staff to consider different learning styles. Templates for lesson plans and assessment guidelines are available on the staff virtual learning environment. Students confirm that teaching is good and a variety of teaching methods is used.

2.7   Existing teaching staff are appropriately qualified, and all potential staff are interviewed by College management. Applicants may be asked to teach a sample lesson dependent upon their teaching experience. The awarding body and organisations scrutinise records of staff qualifications at validation and subsequently annually during external verification visits. This is in accordance with the strategic plan which states that the College aims to employ, support and retain high-quality staff.

2.8   Assessment guidelines are robust and provide a template for the way in which assessment is carried out, including monitoring students' progress against an agreed individual learning plan. Assignment brief templates clearly set out intended learning outcomes, grading criteria and include spaces for internal verification and students' comments on feedback received. The team found that assessment templates are used appropriately and there is evidence that assessments have been internally verified.

2.9   Although written feedback given to students about their assignments is limited, developmental formative feedback is provided before their final submission of assignments and also given verbally when assignments are handed back. Evidence of electronic communications between staff and students confirms that additional constructive feedback is given, which helps students to achieve learning outcomes. Students understand the assessment process and grading criteria, and confirmed that they are informed of the assessment process and what is expected of them.

2.10   Modules which comprise the Association of Chartered and Certified Accountants qualification are externally assessed. The College acts as a tuition provider, following the guidelines of that awarding organisation. Students are provided with a range of learning materials and revision techniques to help them with externally assessed papers.

2.11   Learning outcomes are achieved through the use of a variety of teaching and learning strategies. There is a strong emphasis on the application of learning through research and practical application of knowledge, with students having the opportunity to attend workshops and apply theory to practical situations. The annual monitoring process outlines the way in which course leaders review their programmes and ensure that aims and learning outcomes are met.

2.12   The policy for the observation of teaching and learning has guidelines on the way in which staff are observed and teaching is monitored. Staff are informed of an impending observation and complete a self-evaluation form, which is discussed and compared with the graded observation form at a subsequent date. Lecturers are generally observed twice each year by the Principal, who has an oversight of the quality of teaching and who reports to the Management Board. Lessons are graded and completed observation sheets are passed to the Director of Studies for follow-up visits. Academic staff on some courses have initiated a peer observation of teaching and learning scheme, which provides a vehicle for developing innovative teaching. The team considers this to be an example of good practice. However, the team also considers it desirable for the College to clarify the purpose and operation of its teaching and learning observation schemes.

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

2.13   Students are well supported throughout their studies. The College is relatively small and both administrative and academic staff are involved with student support. In many cases administrative staff provide the first point of contact for enquiries. Students confirm that they are helpful and supportive and, together with tutors, provide a safe and nurturing environment which enhances the student experience.

2.14   Students are given a thorough induction to the College, together with a welcome pack. They are advised about life in the UK and given information about their chosen course, including grading criteria, course structure and learning facilities. They are given hard copies of their course handbook, student charter, learner involvement strategy, term dates and timetable. Those starting late are also given an induction, welcome pack and relevant documentation. Students confirmed that induction is thorough and helpful, and that they know where to go to receive pastoral support. An example was given of a housing problem that was resolved.

2.15   During induction students are assessed on their level of English language competency and every student is given an Individual Learning Plan to help them meet their learning needs to progress through the course. The College states that each student who receives learning support will have his or her progress monitored at least every six weeks, although the team found evidence of monitoring on a termly basis.

2.16   The College takes steps to contact students not regularly attending. Absences are followed up with a telephone call, text or e-mail, and persistent absentees receive a series of formal written warnings. Many lessons are divided into a seminar and a workshop, at which students are given guidance in report writing, referencing and study skills, which students found helpful. Through its policies, the College ensures that careers education, information, advice and guidance are appropriately provided.

2.17   The College places great importance on its use of tutorials. There is a variation in the way tutorial support is provided. Some students are allocated time at the end of lessons to contact tutors, while on other courses tutorial time was by request. A learning support policy outlines the ways in which additional support needs are addressed and an ongoing programme of study skills and English language support is available for students deemed to need additional help. Students confirmed to the team that good support is provided by tutors, and access to them is readily available.

2.18   The College's recently enhanced virtual learning environment is used to good effect to support students. Lesson plans and notes can be accessed by those who have missed classes. Students are now required to submit assignments through the electronic learning portal.

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

2.19   A staff development policy indicates College procedures together with the forms needed for application. Staff development is designed to continually improve the quality of teaching and is aligned to college objectives. A variety of opportunities are available to staff, including in-house sessions and external events. All new staff are required to undertake induction training. The primary responsibility for ensuring that staff development needs are identified and met lies with managers, while development needs are collated through the appraisal process. Staff development needs are also identified through the observation process, a report of which is sent to the Director of Studies.

2.20   Staff maintain individual training logs. Composite records show departmental staff development by attendee and the type of training attended. Staff have attended training events provided by the awarding body and organisations, and QAA. Staff development activities also include support for gaining teaching qualifications and higher degrees. Requests for staff development are made by application to a panel consisting of the Director and the Finance Manager, who consider staff development requests against College strategy and objectives. The provision of financial support is considered in appropriate

cases. Staff are required to report back on any conference attended and all staff development is ultimately evaluated by monitoring its impact on teaching.

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

2.21   Resources are sufficient for the courses offered, with no specialist ones other than software required. They are reviewed annually and are monitored by course tutors. Requests for resources are made by tutors directly to senior management, and are subsequently considered and approved, or otherwise, by the Finance Manager. A recent example of new resources approved is the Information Technology Suite that has specialist software. Details of core texts for courses and any updates are sent to the librarian, who procures them in a timely manner.

2.22   Course annual monitoring reports review the appropriateness of resources. These reviews include any issues relating to the learning resources required for the courses and how they have been addressed, including accommodation, information technology and library support. Students met by the team confirmed that resources are adequate and appropriate to support their learning.

2.23   Students are given a module handbook, which is standardised for all courses. The content covers the general aim of the course, its learning outcomes and underpinning knowledge needed to satisfactorily progress through the individual modules. Students consider handbooks to be helpful and make good use of electronic learning materials, lists of which are provided for them.

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 College ensures clarity, accuracy and adequacy of information presented to the stakeholders through its website and printed documents. The information provided is classified into paper-based publications and electronic documents. The College prospectus was currently not available through the website as it was under review. However, the draft prospectus contains relevant information on the College and course of study, together with academic and general regulations.

3.2   Students indicated in their submission that sufficient information is provided through the website and confirmed the view of the team that it was accurate and enabled them to make an informed decision when joining the College. The website is the main source of information for external stakeholders, together with pamphlets, brochures and advertisements. It presents the experiences, views and achievements of its existing students, together with detailed information on courses offered and updates on intake schedules. The College regularly updates the information provided on its website. Although the course fee details are indicated for each course, it is desirable for the College to make details of specific registration and examination fees payable to the awarding body and organisations more explicit on the website. It is also desirable to include more information on

the nature of the awarding body and organisations to provide clearer information for prospective students.

3.3 Policy guidelines to overseas agents are provided on the website. The provision has effective policies and systems for monitoring the agents and their activities on behalf of the College. Feedback from the students is obtained during induction to ensure that respective agents are providing valid, complete and accurate information to the prospective students. The team was provided with documents detailing strict actions taken against an agent not meeting the policy guidelines.

3.4 The student handbook provides detailed information on rules, regulations and student welfare, from the pre-enrolment stage until the completion of the course. Further, the course books given to every student present comprehensive information related to the course offered. Detailed explanations on various modules, credits, assignments, course delivery plan and assignment schedules are provided, along with information on plagiarism and student academic conduct. The handbooks and coursebooks are reviewed annually and updated. In addition to the induction pack and other published information, the provision includes a learners' charter to enable students to understand their own responsibilities, as well as an understanding of what to expect from the College. Any changes in courses initiated by the awarding body or organisations are communicated to the students regularly through the noticeboards and by email. The team noted that there was some confusion about penalties that students may expect if assignments are submitted beyond the stated deadline. It is desirable to review and clarify the published College policy on late submission of assignments to improve the consistency of treatment of students.

3.5 The College ensures that all the students, teachers and staff have access to the virtual learning environment where detailed policies, course guidelines, assignment guidelines and learning resources are adequately provided. The virtual learning environment, which is in the process of substantial enhancement, enables the teachers to post and share information with students and all other internal stakeholders. The College provides a very convenient access to all the information and learning resources through its virtual learning environment that provides an effective source of information and learning.

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

3.6 A publication policy has been designed, but yet remains to be fully implemented. Currently, the Principal and the Director ensure the accuracy and completeness of information provided from various sources by delegating authority to ensure the quality of information in their purview. The Director signs off the information designated for the website and is ultimately responsible for its accuracy and completeness. Each head of department will review and ensure correctness and completeness of the information provided in the student handbook, the coursebook and printed material. They update them by seeking approval from the Principal or Director before finally making such information public. Student feedback and involvement in the process could further ensure the accuracy, relevance and completeness of public information that the College provides.

> 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]

UK College of Business and Computing Ltd action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight May 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:						
• effective use is made of a well-designed system for the independent collection and analysis of student feedback questionnaires (paragraph 1.5)	Identification of survey weeks and method of distribution and collection Publicity (students) on incidence, importance and effectiveness of student comments Feedback (students) post survey on actions taken and/or intended	October 2012	Programme administrators	Student satisfaction as a stakeholder Comments in appraisals Further follow-up actions Clear link to peer observations Discussion in academic committee meetings Improved academic performance	The Director of the College	Summarisation of the feedback forms Course Self-Evaluation Document Course Qualification Self-Evaluation Document Service Area Self-Evaluation Document Match with the self-appraisal feedback forms

[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.

• the initiation of a peer observation of teaching and learning scheme provides a vehicle for developing innovative teaching (paragraph 2.12).	Standardisation of peer observation, where the lecturers will be given a chance to observe their peers and share good practices at relevant academic meetings	October 2012	Heads of department, with a plan as to whom to observe when, reflecting the modules, module leaders and their peer observers	At the academic board meetings, sharing good practices and discussing some changes with any challenges posed	The Principal of the College	Reflection on the peer observation forms, self-evaluation forms and match the actual with the standards
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:						
• formalise and clarify the operation and structure of its academic committees to maintain a transparent organisational process (paragraphs 1.4 and 2.3).	Formalisation of structure of duties and responsibilities of the operations structure Standardisation of various committees and usage of the same titles across various reports and communications Maintenance of minutes for all meetings and action agenda follow-up	September 2012	Director of Studies	Standardised communication Clear duties and responsibilities Formalisation of various boards and its implementation across various operations Coordination and communication Reflection towards monitoring and review process, clarification within	Principal and the Director of the College	Committee minutes Reports from externals and monitoring review report by various quality checkers like ISO 9001 Quality report reflected in the Service Area Self-Evaluation Document, Course Qualification Self-Evaluation Document, Course Self-Evaluation

				Course Qualification Self-Evaluation Document, Course Self-Evaluation Document, Service Area Self-Evaluation Document, board meetings		Document, board meeting, performance appraisal
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:						
• formally map its policies to relevant external reference points, such as the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, to provide clearer evidence of their alignment to them (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.4)	Identification of the key areas Link the College policies and map them to the applicable section of the *Code of practice*, such as: • *Section 2* to teaching and learning strategy, including e-learning • *Section 4* to monitoring policy, internal verification policy, external verification reporting strategy,	September 2012	Director, Principal, Director of Studies and supporting staff	Coordination and control, and a smooth functionality of running the overall process, understanding the relevant use of each section of the *Code of practice* and reflection towards continuous improvement	Quality Assurance Committee	Measured by: all existing policies revised and include mapping document; all new policies show/map 'fit' with external reference points Outcome: continuous improvement towards assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education

	quality assurance manual • *Section 5* to appeals and complaints policy, and disciplinary policy • *Section 6* to students' assessment policy, quality improvement policy, learner support policy, assignment procedure and process, plagiarism policy. • *Section 7* to moderation policy, monitoring and review process, quality assurance, teaching and learning strategy • *Section 10* to admissions policy, publicity policy					
• clarify the purpose and operation of its teaching and learning observation schemes (paragraph 2.12)	Restructuring the staff development policy, procedure and process, covering the areas of peer observation, self-appraisal	September 2012	Principal	Clarity of the purpose of peer observation and its link to staff development, performance appraisals and	Director and the Management Board	Measured by: staff reviews feedback on clarity of policy/process and outcomes (to identify staff

	procedure and process and adopting the 360 degree staff development and feedback process			continuous professional development		development needs, workshops, continuous professional development opportunities)
• make details of specific registration and examination fees payable to the awarding body and organisations more explicit on the website (paragraph 3.2)	On the website: listing the awarding body and organisations against each course and the registration and examination fees that need to be paid to the awarding body and organisations	September 2012	Publication Committee with key responsibility with the Director, Finance Manager and Admissions Officer	Clearer information and compulsion towards registration, either by including it as a part of the fees or making the student responsible towards registration fees	Director and Principal	Clearer understanding by, and communication with, potential students
• include more information on the nature of the awarding body and organisations to provide clearer information for prospective students (paragraph 3.2)	Review and clarify information in the prospectus, student handbook, website and also a pre-induction before the student is issued a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies	September 2012	Admissions Officer and the Marketing Department	Clearer understanding of the methodology of study, process and procedure, challenges, pre-arrival homework and research that needs to be made by prospective students	Director and Principal	Clearer understanding of the role of awarding body and organisations in the ultimate award Measured by fewer student enquires and positive feedback in student queries
• review and clarify the published College policy on	Restructuring and revising the assignment	September 2012	Director of Studies and heads of	Clear understanding, discipline, and	Principal	Reduction of late submission

| late submission of assignments to improve the consistency of treatment of students (paragraph 3.4). | procedure and process, resubmission process and challenges towards late submission, including the e-learning submission process and strategy and reflect it to the views of the student focused group

Clearer identification of penalties | | department | avoidance of late submission

Standardisation of the procedure and quality improvement

Policy of penalties for late submission understood and applied | | Differentiating the meritorious student from resubmission student by introducing the capping system, quality improvement and overall student performance, time management, easier and timely assessment |

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 courses 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 courses 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 1 to 8, with levels 4 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 organisations.

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:

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[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 course 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 courses 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.