



# **Bader International Study Centre**

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

June 2016

## 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 Bader International Study Centre. The review took place on 15 June 2016 and was conducted by a panel, as follows:

- Dr Elizabeth Briggs
- Dr Jenny Gilbert
- Mr Simon Ives.

The main purpose of the review was to:

- make judgements about the provider's delegated responsibilities for the management of quality and improvement of learning opportunities
- draw a conclusion about whether the provider's public information is reliable
- produce a commentary on how effectively the provider discharges its responsibilities for academic standards
- 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 2. The [context](#) in which these findings should be interpreted is explained on page 4. [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 the review method can be found in the [published handbook](#).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us)

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=202](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=202)

## Key findings

The QAA panel considered evidence relating to the educational provision at Bader International Study Centre (BISC), both information supplied in advance and evidence gathered during the review visit itself. The review has resulted in the key findings stated in this section.

## Judgements

The QAA panel formed the following judgement about Bader International Study Centre.

- Bader International Study Centre **satisfactorily** manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in its contractual arrangements with its academic partners.
- **Confidence** can reasonably be placed in the soundness of Bader International Study Centre's management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.

## Conclusion about public information

The QAA has panel concluded that:

- **reliance** can be placed on the information that the Bader International Study Centre produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

## Good practice

The QAA panel identified the following **features of good practice** at Bader International Study Centre:

- the use of quality assurance and feedback processes to respond quickly and effectively to issues raised (paragraph 1.3)
- the role of experiential learning opportunities in providing students with opportunities to link theory and practice, and in supporting the development of transferable skills (paragraph 2.6)
- the engagement of a wide range of faculty in an extensive range of staff development activities (paragraph 2.14)
- the comprehensive information provided for students before registration, after arrival, and for transition onto further study at Queen's University (paragraph 3.3).

## Recommendations

The QAA panel makes the following recommendations to the Bader International Study Centre.

It would be **desirable** for Bader International Study Centre to:

- address the variable practice by faculty staff in adhering to academic regulations relating to extenuating circumstances, late submission and assessment deadlines (paragraph 1.6).

## Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: Bader International Study Centre

- review and rationalise the system for students' feedback to encourage a higher response rate for evaluations of courses, programmes and the Bader International Study Centre experience (paragraph 2.8).

## Context

The Bader International Study Centre (BISC) at Herstmonceux, Sussex, was established as an affiliated campus of Queen's University (Queen's) in Ontario, Canada, in 1994. It hosts primarily Canadian first-year undergraduates on study abroad programmes in a residential setting both for Queen's and non-Queen's students. Students attending one of the Canadian University Study Abroad Program (CUSAP) partner institutions in Canada can apply to attend BISC for their entire first year. There are also options to apply for the Upper Year Program through either CUSAP or other partner institutions. All students are recruited through Queen's. Students must already be enrolled for a bachelor's degree with honours and have a letter of permission from their home institution. BISC does not award its own degrees and students gain credit towards an award of Queen's, or their home institution. Programmes of study include a mixture of academic and field studies, with an emphasis on 'international studies', in accordance with BISC's ethos and vision of its benefactors: doctors Alfred and Isabel Bader.

BISC is a charitable trust with a board of trustees which plays a key role in the oversight of its management of the Centre. The Board is chaired by the Provost of Queen's. BISC's Academic Director is directly responsible to the Provost for the ongoing management of the Centre, including the quality of the academic experience.

From an initial offering limited to first year humanities and social science courses, the BISC programme has evolved to include law, engineering, health studies, and science options for both first-year and upper-year students. There is a particular focus on interdisciplinary studies and an integrated first year programme built around a core course and related co-curricular programme. BISC has developed an ethos based on active learning, cross-cultural competencies, and primary research for all undergraduates. The proximity to London and continental Europe fosters an experiential learning approach.

Annually, BISC hosts around 130 students with first-year and upper-year standing during the autumn and winter terms. The summer programme recruits up to 170 students, who participate in an arts and science summer school, specialised field schools and academic conferences.

BISC is responsible for the quality of the academic experience while students are in the UK, which includes maintaining the quality of the assessment processes. The respective responsibilities of Queen's and its partners covering the period of study at BISC are clearly specified in study abroad agreements. BISC academic courses are evaluated and accredited by the Queen's and BISC curriculum committees and contribute to degrees awarded by Queen's. The overall academic infrastructure that governs the BISC programme is primarily set by Queen's. BISC is subject to the latter's quality assurance arrangements in the progression towards degrees. Queen's itself is under the quality assurance oversight of the Provincial Government of Ontario.

Definitions of what constitutes a bachelor's degree with honours are defined by Queen's. Queen's complies with the Quality Assurance Framework of the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. BISC is responsible for the quality of the academic experience while students are in the UK, which includes the implementation of Queen's Quality Assurance strategy. BISC's quality assurance processes also take significant account of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), and the enhancement of student learning opportunities is fostered by the use of guidance documents, and annual monitoring visits by QAA. Additionally, BISC is an affiliate member of the Association of American Study Abroad Programmes United Kingdom and the European Association for International Education in order to support the development of good practice and consortium comparison in the field of study abroad providers.

## Detailed findings about the Bader International Study Centre

### 1 Academic standards

#### How effectively does the Bader International Study Centre fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1 Queen's University sets the framework and quality assurance infrastructure for the management of academic standards at BISC. The Academic Director reports directly to the Provost of Queen's on the management of the BISC programme. BISC has robust and mature processes for fulfilling its responsibilities for the academic standards of the programmes for which it has delegated responsibility. Programmes and courses are managed and developed by three appropriate committees - the Curriculum Committee, the Experiential Learning Committee, and the Research Committee.

1.2 BISC offers courses in disciplines aligned with those offered at Queen's, which form an agreed programme of study, with set intended learning outcomes and credit values. BISC also offers mandatory core courses, international courses, or interdisciplinary studies of special interest which are designed and approved by the Curriculum Committee. BISC courses are developed in consultation with the relevant Queen's department to ensure that they prepare students for progression within their programme of study.

1.3 BISC quality assurance processes are used effectively in the management of academic standards and for the development of new courses across a range of disciplines. BISC provided a highly effective response to resolving issues raised in the delivery of the new chemistry course. Timely and effective modifications were made following early concerns raised by the student representative to the Academic Director. Actions have included regular monitoring of the impact of the changes, including the incorporation of experiential learning outcomes and enhanced resources, to ensure that standards are maintained. The use of quality assurance and feedback processes to respond quickly and effectively to issues raised is **good practice**.

1.4 The formal course review process considers student focus group opinions on issues such as course load and assessment weightings, departmental pedagogy, marking and grade distribution, experiential learning, and co-curricular frameworks. Action plans are produced to enhance courses for future delivery and these are monitored by the Curriculum Committee.

1.5 The Student Services Manager leads a team which provides academic support and promotes academic success. Academic advisers provide support for students, contribute to the orientation programme and respond in a timely manner to student queries. Three additional academic advisers visit the campus to support first year students on arrival with information about major/minor and medial pathways. Subject-specific advice is also offered online on transition to a particular academic programme.

1.6 BISC operates both informal and formal appeals processes in line with Queen's Appeals Policy. The process is managed by the Appeals Office, and may result in the Deputy Academic Director arranging for double blind-marking of assignments. BISC has appropriate policies and procedures governing attendance, extenuating circumstances and penalties for late submission of work. However, staff and students reported variation in practice in the use of extenuating circumstances and penalties for late submission of assignments. It would be **desirable** for BISC to address the variable practice by faculty staff

in adhering to academic regulations relating to extenuating circumstances, late submission and assessment deadlines.

1.7 BISC Academic Integrity regulations are directly aligned with those of Queen's. Every course syllabus informs students of their responsibilities to ensure that academic integrity is maintained, that unfair advantage is not gained and that work is not plagiarised. Students confirm that they are given comprehensive guidance on upholding academic integrity in their assessments.

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

1.8 BISC has traditionally used Queen's reference points, for example in programme and course specifications. These specifications incorporate the Quality Assurance Framework of the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. More recently, the Quality Code and the relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements have been circulated to faculty members, many of whom are aware of these reference points and find them helpful. There are continuing activities to relate the management of academic standards to the Quality Code, particularly institutional practices that support students to achieve their academic targets.

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

1.9 The recently formed External Educational Quality Committee (EEQC) has met twice and produced an action plan related to the enhancement of provision. The EEQC has external membership and is chaired by the Queen's Vice-Provost for Teaching and Learning.

1.10 The EEQC provides valuable oversight of the processes for the assessment of learning outcomes, and is a key area of deliberation. Faculty staff are proactive in assessing transferable learning outcomes and student engagement levels. Specific observations about the role of the Curriculum Committee in programme design, development and approval are noted in the report and references explicitly made to consideration of the various expectations of the Quality Code. Recommendations and action plans in the EEQC report are monitored and audited by the Curriculum Committee. Progress on the implementation of the action plan is reported back to the EEQC.

1.11 Assessment practice is aligned with that of Queen's, which has a monitoring oversight of all BISC assessments. Each course syllabus has a rubric for oral assessments. Faculty members receive clear documented advice on the grading policy in the Faculty Handbook and are expected to return graded work within 14 working days. Students have access to their grades on the virtual learning environment (VLE), and final numerical averages are approved by the Programme Director. Final averages are converted to the official Queen's grading scale by the Academic Secretary prior to transmission to the University. Grading and grade distributions are reviewed by departments at BISC to ensure consistency of approach.

The panel has concluded that Bader International Study Centre **satisfactorily** manages its responsibilities for academic standards in accordance with the requirements of its awarding partners.

## 2 Quality of learning opportunities

### **How effectively does the Bader International Study Centre fulfil its responsibilities for managing the quality of learning opportunities?**

2.1 Academic courses at BISC are accredited by Queen's with the BISC Curriculum Committee having oversight of the quality of the student learning experience. The committee terms of reference include the assurance of academic quality across all BISC provision with clear learning objectives, course expectations, and assessments. The Curriculum Committee ensures that faculty members are actively engaged in the quality enhancement process. The minutes of the committee are comprehensive, although outcomes, actions and their review are less clearly presented. Observations and recommendations emanating from the annual reports of the EEQC make an important contribution to the deliberations of the Curriculum Committee in enhancing the quality of student learning opportunities. The Curriculum Committee audits progress on recommendations and reports back to EEQC.

2.2 In 2014, Queen's University adopted a Strategic Enrolment Management Framework to focus on student recruitment, admission, progression, completion and graduation. As part of this framework, the BISC Enrolment Taskforce, a short-term working group, including BISC and Queen's senior managers, was set up. It has a wide-ranging remit to assess programme planning, and all aspects of admissions and student retention, using student survey data. The final report, due in summer 2016, is intended to inform future strategic planning.

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

2.3 The EEQC includes external contribution by an academic from a UK university. This role supports the committee in its monitoring and evaluation role by providing understanding of the relevant expectations of the UK Quality Code. Academic faculty members at BISC are familiar with Subject Benchmark Statements, and information about new or amended Statements is circulated to all staff. This process is effective in supporting engagement with UK benchmarks combined with the requirements of the Provincial Government of Ontario.

### **How effectively does the Bader International Study Centre assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?**

2.4 The Curriculum Committee has oversight of the monitoring of course content and delivery. Observations of teaching and learning are undertaken by the Academic Director and the Deputy Academic Director, using BISC Guidelines for Best Practice in the Observation of Teaching and Learning. These include providing appropriate feedback to faculty staff.

2.5 Experiential learning opportunities (ELOs) are a key element of all programmes, and considered by BISC as their signature pedagogy. Each ELO takes place over a period of up to three days. ELOs take a variety of formats, although they are frequently study visits, particularly to London, where the theory of relevant modules is integrated closely with the experiential activity. Academic faculty staff attend workshops to develop their ability to design and effectively integrate the ELO within taught modules, and there is a helpful good practice guidelines document. Faculty staff make proposals to management for an ELO in order to gain funding for specific module activities. The Experiential Learning Office collects feedback from students and there is a process for staff to observe an ELO with a scoring system for specified elements. An Experiential Learning Manager reports annually on



activities and on responses from faculty and the oversight of the student learning experience of ELOs.

2.6 Students confirmed many examples of successful ELOs which had been linked effectively to their studies. These include the use of the Mass Observation archive at the University of Sussex; use of telescopes at the Herstmonceux Observatory Science Centre; a visit to the Scottish Parliament with the opportunity to interview key participants; visits to art galleries and to sites of historical interest; and a visit to a hospice to discuss inter-professional working in the health sector. Academic faculty members are also able to describe the benefits of ELOs and their links to the curriculum, such as a visit to the Pasteur Institute for a science module, and the development of students' subject knowledge. The role of experiential learning opportunities in providing students with opportunities to link theory and practice, and in supporting the development of transferable skills is **good practice**.

2.7 BISC monitors the effectiveness of support to students in a variety of ways and feedback is collected and analysed to inform action plans for improving student support. Each term the Queen's University Survey of Student Assessment of Teaching is undertaken for each module. While the University reports only quantitative data, BISC considers that this alone is not adequate for informing change and undertakes other survey activities. Additionally, a Queen's Classroom Survey of Student Engagement asks about students' activities, including what contributions they have made in class. The University Enrolment Taskforce organises focus groups with first year students and BISC alumni at Queen's to compare their experiences and perceptions of studying at BISC and to consider activities inside and outside the classroom.

2.8 BISC recently introduced an attitude survey for the mandatory core courses. This has led to the redesign of some core modules following the raising of student concerns, although, overall, there has been a low response rate. BISC has a new Student Satisfaction Survey based on the UK National Student Survey (NSS), which requires responses on the key areas of academic experience, student life, facilities and catering. Some academic faculty staff indicated that, in addition to the formal mechanisms, they also collect feedback from students. Staff reported that there is an element of student fatigue with the wide range of surveys undertaken and this results in low response rates on some surveys. It would be **desirable** for BISC to review and rationalise the system for students' feedback to encourage a higher response rate for evaluations of courses, programmes and the BISC experience.

2.9 A Student Government is elected within two weeks of students' arrival in autumn. Elections are for a range of posts, and the students' Academic Representative meets the Academic Director on a weekly basis. The Student Government occasionally holds collective meetings with class representatives and there are Town Hall meetings open to all students every six weeks. Additionally, the Queen's Provost meets students twice per year when visiting BISC. The Student Government reports annually to the Board of Trustees, and this year the report is intended to be shared with the Enrolment Taskforce to obtain a more candid perspective of student experience and support processes. The comprehensive information for the report was collected through a variety of informal means, focus groups, electronic postings and open forums.

### **How effectively does the Bader International Study Centre assure itself that students are appropriately supported?**

2.10 On arrival at BISC, students receive academic advice within their orientation pack. They are permitted to make changes to their selected modules during the early weeks of the term, supported by two academic advisers. Students appreciate this support and make good use of it. Advisers from the main Queen's campus visit BISC to assist students on transition to year two.

2.11 The Safeguarding Policy and Procedure outlines the principles of student safety. Where a student's welfare is believed to be at risk, Student Services may apply the Fitness to Study Procedure, a series of steps taken to ensure that the student is able to continue their education. There is also an appropriate equal opportunities policy. Student Services have been trialling academic success workshops related to two courses during 2015-16. As a result of students' positive responses, BISC is appointing a full-time Student Success Coordinator to run these workshops together with a variation of the Queen's Bounce Back Program, an academic support initiative for first year students. Students informed the team that they had access to a variety of support mechanisms and are clear whom they should approach with any problems.

2.12 Overall, students benefit from the small class sizes, ready access to support mechanisms, regular ELO trips, and BISC's responsiveness to concerns about the refectory and accommodation issues. Some students consider the campus location to be isolated with limited access to public transport, although they have the ability to book the minibus service provided by BISC. For upper year Queen's students, BISC provides summer courses not available on the main campus and the potential to make up credits in a relaxed setting, with access to a wide range of ELOs in Europe.

### **How effective are the Bader International Study Centre's arrangements for staff development in relation to maintaining and/or enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?**

2.13 Faculty teaching staff are observed by either the Academic Director or the Deputy Academic Director. The reporting of observations and their follow-up has recently been formalised with new guidelines setting out a good practice framework to maximise the benefit of the observations.

2.14 A faculty professional development coordinator was appointed in 2015 to set up the professional development programme. This has the goal of developing the faculty skill sets with a focus on experiential learning, small class instruction, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The coordinator prepares an annual report where attendance is recorded and sessions are evaluated. Six workshops have been held in the current academic year and attendance has been good. The engagement of a wide range of faculty in an extensive range of staff development activities is **good practice**. BISC has also implemented an innovative student-determined teaching awards scheme to enable students to publicly recognise faculty staff who have guided their learning.

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

2.15 A Queen's University consultant has reviewed BISC's resources to establish whether they are appropriate for different aspects of the student learning experience. Among the recommendations are the integration of Computing Services with the library and the preparation of a library mission statement. There are minimum standards for the VLE and these are regularly checked by managers. Course approvals require BISC to have relevant resources to support the intended learning outcomes. The use of off-campus chemistry laboratories is one example of how BISC manages resources of an appropriate standard.

2.16 There has been a major review of space resulting in the BISC Space Plan aiming to improve and optimise facilities on campus. The report summary has been subject to consultation with faculty, staff and students. The Academic Director confirmed that actions will be prioritised on the basis of need and the funding available.

The panel has **confidence** that Bader International Study Centre 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 Bader International Study Centre's arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information it has responsibility for publishing?**

3.1 The marketing team at Queen's has overall responsibility for public information and the BISC website. Queen's is in the process of migrating its virtual learning platform following detailed consultations, which is currently being tested by faculty staff. Oversight of the VLE is managed through the Curriculum Committee which checks each term that it conforms to minimum institutional requirements.

3.2 The BISC website is user-friendly and contains a wealth of information for prospective and current students, faculty staff and other stakeholders. The Special Projects Officer proposed a new site map following a recent national audit of higher education websites. The website provides detailed fees information and contains the BISC General Rules and Regulations and the BISC Appeals Policy. Website information responds effectively to Queen's requirements and the UK Quality Code (Part C) requirements. The Academic Director has ultimate responsibility for signing off information for accuracy, and ensuring that BISC information published on the Queen's website is up to date and reliable.

3.3 Students confirm that the website is easily accessed and contains accurate information which they appreciate. In particular, students agree that information provided pre-registration, post arrival and about programme choices is clear, accurate and helpful. The website gives programme and course information with course descriptions, expected learning outcomes, field studies, primary research expectations and assessment methods. The Student Handbook and a Faculty Handbook contain detailed regulations. The comprehensive information provided for students before registration, after arrival and for transition onto further study at Queen's University is **good practice**.

The panel concludes that **reliance can be placed** on the accuracy and completeness of the information that Bader International Study Centre is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

## 4 Action plan<sup>3</sup>

Bader International Study Centre action plan relating to the Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight in June 2016						
Good practice	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The review panel identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within Bader International Study Centre:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the use of quality assurance and feedback processes to respond quickly and effectively to issues raised (paragraph 1.3)</li> </ul>	Maintain and enhance current practice	As well as the weekly meetings between Student Government and the Academic Director, we will have a weekly opportunity for all students to meet with the Academic Director and/or Deputy Academic Director, arranged as a drop-in session	To be implemented for autumn term 2016	Deputy Academic Director	Academic Director	Deputy Academic Director will maintain records of students using the drop-in session and the concerns they are bringing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the role of experiential learning opportunities in providing students with</li> </ul>	Maintain and enhance current practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the pedagogical training</li> <li>Expand good practice on field studies to in-class experiential opportunities</li> </ol>	Winter term 2017	Faculty Professional Development Coordinator Experiential	Academic Director and Deputy Academic Director	1 The Faculty Professional Development Coordinator will maintain records of pedagogical

<sup>3</sup> Bader International Study Centre 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.

<p>opportunities to link theory and practice, and in supporting the development of transferable skills (paragraph 2.6)</p>				<p>Learning Manager</p>	<p>training opportunities and attendance</p> <p>Strategies to measure the impact on student experience will be discussed with the Deputy Academic Director</p> <p>2 The Experiential Learning Manager will expand the current Experiential Learning Opportunities framework to include in-class activities and will link in transferable skills</p> <p>Strategies to measure the impact on student experience will be discussed</p>
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						with the Deputy Academic Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the engagement of a wide range of faculty in an extensive range of staff development activities (paragraph 2.14)</li> </ul>	Maintain and enhance current practice	<p>1 Invite faculty to propose topics for professional development</p> <p>2 Invite other staff, including the newly appointed Academic Success Coordinator, to contribute to, and direct, professional development workshops</p> <p>3 Increase advertising for the annual faculty summer 'boot camp' (two-day pedagogic retreat)</p>	To begin in autumn term 2016 with a view to becoming standard procedure by next academic year	Faculty Professional Development Coordinator	Academic Director and Deputy Academic Director	<p>The Faculty Professional Development Coordinator already maintained rigorous records of professional development opportunities and faculty attendance and response</p> <p>Additional feedback, specifically to investigate the real impact on student learning will be collected in a manner to be determined by discussion with the Deputy Academic Director</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the comprehensive information provided for students before</li> </ul>	Maintain	Ensure all information remains up to date	Ongoing	Special Projects Officer	Academic Director	Ongoing verification of information

registration, after arrival, and for transition onto further study at Queen's University (paragraph 3.3).						
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Intended outcomes</b>	<b>Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes</b>	<b>Target date/s</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation (process or evidence)</b>
The panel considers that it would be <b>desirable</b> for BISC to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review and rationalise the system for students' feedback to encourage a higher response rate for evaluations of courses, programmes and the Bader International Study Centre experience (paragraph 2.8)</li> </ul>	<p>1 Combine multiple surveys into a single exit survey</p> <p>2 Develop a stronger culture of feedback by demonstrating to students how their opinions affect genuine change</p>	<p>1 Collect all surveys currently being administered at BISC, check for duplication of information, verify that all survey questions can contribute to output and change, and develop a single BISC exit survey that addresses all importance aspects of the student experience (note that course-specific surveys would remain unchanged by this)</p> <p>2 Use hot desks for students to fill in surveys (in the library, and so on)</p>	Before the end of winter term 2017	Deputy Academic Director, Special Projects Officer, Academic Success Coordinator	Academic Director	Survey response rate will measure the success of the strategy

		Newly appointed Academic Success Coordinator to discuss feedback with students so they understand where their data goes and what it is used for				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>address the variable practice by faculty staff in adhering to academic regulations relating to extenuating circumstances, late submission and assessment deadlines (paragraph 1.6).</li> </ul>	Encourage faculty to adhere to existing academic policies, already in place at the BISC	<p>1 Change wording on documentation sent to faculty to be clearer about the existing policies</p> <p>2 Discuss this issue at the beginning of term faculty meeting</p> <p>3 Design an extenuating circumstances' form that is filled in by the student and assessed/approved by an Academic Adviser - this would lead to all requests being assessed on an equal level rather than by individual faculty</p>	Before autumn term 2016	Deputy Academic Director	Academic Director	Include a question about the application of policies in the exit survey



## Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/glossary](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/glossary). More details and formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [handbook](#)<sup>4</sup> for this review method.

**Academic quality** A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, higher education providers manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

**Academic standards** The standards set and maintained by degree-awarding bodies for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

**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.

**Enhancement** The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

**Good practice** A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

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

**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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© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2016  
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB  
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel 01452 557050  
Web [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

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<sup>4</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=202](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=202)