



Integrated quality and enhancement review

Summative review

Burnley College

February 2011

SR 028/2010

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2011

ISBN 978 1 84979 276 9

All QAA's publications are available on our website www.qaa.ac.uk

Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Preface

The mission of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to inform and encourage continual improvement in the management of the quality of higher education. As part of this mission, QAA undertakes reviews of higher education provision delivered in further education colleges. This process is known as Integrated quality and enhancement review (IQER).

Purpose of IQER

Higher education programmes delivered by further education colleges (colleges) lead to awards made by higher education institutions or Edexcel. The awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for maintaining the academic standards of their awards and assuring the quality of the students' learning opportunities. The purpose of IQER is, therefore, to safeguard the public interest in the academic standards and quality of higher education delivered in colleges. It achieves this by providing objective and independent information about the way in which colleges discharge their responsibilities within the context of their partnership agreements with awarding bodies. IQER focuses on three core themes: academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and public information.

The IQER process

IQER is a peer review process. It is divided into two complementary stages: Developmental engagement and Summative review. In accordance with the published method, colleges with less than 100 full-time equivalent students funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) may elect not to take part in Developmental engagements, but all HEFCE-funded colleges will take part in Summative review.

Developmental engagement

Developmental engagements explore in an open and collegial way the challenges colleges face in specific areas of higher education provision. Each college's first, and often their only, Developmental engagement focuses on student assessment.

The main elements of a Developmental engagement are:

- a self-evaluation by the college
- an optional written submission by the student body
- a preparatory meeting between the college and the IQER coordinator several weeks before the Developmental engagement visit
- the Developmental engagement visit, which normally lasts two days
- the evaluation of the extent to which the college manages effectively its responsibilities for the delivery of academic standards and the quality of its higher education provision, plus the arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of public information it is responsible for publishing about its higher education
- the production of a written report of the team's findings.

To promote a collegial approach, Developmental engagement teams include up to two members of staff from the further education college under review. They are known as nominees for this process.

Summative review

Summative review addresses all aspects of a college's HEFCE-funded higher education provision and provides judgements on the management and delivery of this provision against core themes one and two, and a conclusion against core theme three.

Summative review shares the main elements of Developmental engagement described above. Summative review teams however, are composed of the IQER coordinator and QAA reviewers. They do not include nominees.

Evidence

In order to obtain evidence for the review, IQER teams carry out a number of activities, including:

- reviewing the college's self-evaluation and its internal procedures and documents
- reviewing the optional written submission from students
- asking questions of relevant staff
- talking to students about their experiences.

IQER teams' expectations of colleges are guided by a nationally agreed set of reference points, known as the Academic Infrastructure. These are published by QAA and consist of:

- *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* which includes descriptions of different higher education qualifications
- the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*
- subject benchmark statements, which describe the characteristics of degrees in different subjects
- guidelines for preparing programme specifications, which are descriptions of what is on offer to students in individual programmes of study
- award benchmark statements which describe the generic characteristics of an award, for example Foundation Degrees.

In addition, Developmental engagement teams gather evidence by focusing on particular aspects of the theme under review. These are known as 'lines of enquiry'.

Outcomes of IQER

Each Developmental engagement and Summative review results in a written report:

- Developmental engagement reports set out good practice and recommendations and implications for the college and its awarding bodies, but do not contain judgements. Recommendations will be at one of three levels - **essential**, **advisable** and **desirable**. To promote an open and collegial approach to Developmental engagements, the reports are not published.
- Summative review reports identify good practice and contain judgements about whether the college is discharging its responsibilities effectively against core themes one and two above. The judgements are **confidence**, **limited confidence** or **no confidence**. There is no judgement for the third core theme, instead the report will provide evaluation and a conclusion. Summative review reports are published. Differentiated judgements can be made where a team judges a college's

management of the standards and/or quality of the awards made by one awarding body to be different from those made by another.

Colleges are required to develop an action plan to address any recommendations arising from IQER. Progress against these action plans is monitored by QAA in conjunction with HEFCE and/or the college's awarding body(ies) as appropriate. The college's action plan in response to the conclusions of the Summative review will be published as part of the report.

Executive summary

The Summative review of Burnley College carried out in February 2011

As a result of its investigations, the Summative review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies. The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities, as set out in its partnership agreements, for the quality of learning opportunities it offers. The team considers that reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Good practice

The team has identified the following good practice for dissemination:

- the extent of support given to college staff to improve their qualifications by appropriate courses of study within the University of Central Lancashire is extensive and apparent across all programmes, resulting in high quality teaching and assessment
- the use of various mechanisms, such as the swap shop and extensive team teaching, are highly effective in sharing good practice
- the excellent all-round support for students provided by the College, which leads to enhanced student achievement
- the informative joint prospectus and clearly signposted website with a dedicated University Campus area are valued by students and employers.

Recommendations

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

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

- update the current memorandum of cooperation to reflect fully the move to the new campus
- consider the consolidation and further embedding of the committee structure and consequential reporting mechanisms
- explore opportunities to extend access to the library and to provide more quiet working spaces
- further develop the handbook review system to ensure that all necessary information, such as programme specifications, is included
- devise checking procedures to ensure key course information is available on the virtual learning environment.

A Introduction and context

1 This report presents the findings of the Summative review of higher education funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) conducted at Burnley College. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College discharges its responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes which the College delivers on behalf of the University of Central Lancashire. The review was carried out by Ms Ann-Marie Colbert, Mr Mark Cooper, Professor Keith Johnson (reviewers) and Dr Mark Mabey (coordinator).

2 The Summative review team (the team) conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with *The handbook for Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review* (the handbook), published by QAA. Evidence in support of the Summative review included documentation supplied by the College and awarding bodies; meetings with staff, students and partner institutions; reports of reviews by QAA and from inspections by Ofsted. In particular, the team drew on the findings and recommendations of the Developmental engagement in assessment. A summary of findings from this Developmental engagement is provided in section C of this report. The review also considered the College's use of the Academic Infrastructure, developed by QAA on behalf of higher education providers, with reference to the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)*, subject and award benchmark statements, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and programme specifications.

3 In order to assist HEFCE to gain information to assist with the assessment of the impact of Foundation Degree (FD) awards, section D of this report summarises details of the FD programmes delivered at the College.

4 Burnley College is a medium-sized general further education college and in September 2009 moved its provision to a single site on a purpose built £80 million campus. Students are enrolled mainly from the town of Burnley and the surrounding area of East Lancashire, with just over half of learners living in widening participation postcode areas. In 2007-08, 69 per cent of students aged 16 to 18 were eligible for the educational maintenance allowance. Within the local area there is a school sixth form centre a mile from the College's main site and two more further education colleges within a 10 mile radius. The College delivers community provision in a range of venues in the local area, employer sponsored programmes to around 2,000 learners, and an apprentice programme to 550 work-based learners. In partnership with the University of Central Lancashire (the University) the College has 700 higher education students.

5 The higher education awards at the College, funded by HEFCE, are listed below, followed by the number of full-time equivalent students where applicable.

- Certificate in Teaching and Lifelong Learning, part-time (6 students) (1.5 FTEs)
- BA (Honours) Education, part-time (17 students) (9 FTEs)
- BA (Honours) Education and Professional Studies, full-time (9 students)
- Post Graduate Certificate in Education, full-time and part-time (99 students) (59 FTEs)
- Post Graduate Certificate in Education, (in service post-16) (49 students) (24.5 FTEs)
- University Certificate Office Practice, part-time (1 student) (0.16 FTE)
- FdA Administration Management, part-time (42 students) (27.3 FTEs)
- FdA Business, full-time and part-time (49 students) (35.8 FTEs)

Integrated quality and enhancement review

- FdA Contact Centre Management, part-time (5 students) (2.5 FTEs)
- FdA Event and Tourism Management, full-time (11 students)
- HND Furniture - Design and Make, full-time and part-time (10 students) (9.2 FTEs)
- FdA Media Production, full-time (5 students)
- FdA Music, full-time (20 students)
- FdA New Media Design and Technology, full-time and part-time (27 students) (24 FTEs)
- FdA Theatre and Performance, full-time (8 FTEs)
- BA (Honours) Art and Design Foundation Entry, full-time (9 students)
- BA (Honours) Foundation Entry Performance/Media, full-time and part-time (7 students) (6 FTEs)
- University Certificate in Counselling Skills, part-time (12 students) (2 FTEs)
- University Certificate Criminology, part-time (2 students) (0.3 FTE)
- FdA Health and Social Care (Mental Health), full-time and part-time (21 students) (18.1 FTEs)
- FdA Health and Social Care (Rehabilitation), full-time and part time (21 students) (17.6 FTEs)
- FdA Health and Social Care (Social Care), full-time and part-time (27 students) (25.6 FTEs)
- FdA Integrated Education and Care, full-time and part-time (77 students) (60.2 FTEs)
- BA (Honours) Social Work, full-time and part-time (27 students) (24.6 FTEs)
- University Certificate Project Management, part-time (4 students) (0.6 FTE)
- University Certificate Web Design, part-time (1 student) (0.16 FTE)
- FdSc Computing, full-time and part-time (29 students) (27.2 FTEs)
- FdSc Computer Aided Engineering, full-time and part-time (17 students) (14.7 FTEs)
- FdSc Information Communication Technology, full-time and part-time (29 students) (21.9 FTEs)
- BSc (Honours) Computing (foundation entry), full-time (8 students)
- BSc (Honours) Computing (top-up), full-time and part-time (8 students) (7 FTEs)
- BSc (Honours) Information Communication Technology (top-up), full-time and part-time (8 students) (6.5 FTEs)
- HNC Engineering - Electrical and Electronic, part-time (8 students) (3.5 FTEs)
- HNC Engineering - Mechanical and Manufacture, part-time (13 students) (5.5 FTEs)
- FdSc Building Services, Engineering and Sustainability, part-time (13 students) (7.8 FTEs)
- BEng (Honours) Computer Aided Engineering (foundation entry), part-time (1 student) (0.6 FTE)
- BA Combined Honours Foundation Entry, full-time (27 students)
- BA Combined Honours Year 1, full-time (27 students)
- FdSc Health and Personal Training, full-time (20 students)
- FdSc Sports Coaching Performance, full-time (31 students)
- FdSc Sports Science, full-time (13 students).

Partnership agreements with the awarding bodies

6 Burnley College has a long-standing partnership with the University of Central Lancashire (the University) going back to the late 1980s, and since 1994 all higher education provision at the College has been provided exclusively through this partnership.

Recent developments in higher education at the College

7 Higher education provision is a well-established part of the curriculum offer at the College, which has had a long standing partnership with the University of Central Lancashire going back to the 1980s. As higher education provision developed, the College took the decision in the 1990s that it would deliver franchised higher education programmes exclusively through the University as its single awarding body partner. All the College higher education programmes are therefore indirectly funded through the University. The current (2009-10) higher education curriculum consists of 47 distinct programmes offered through 59 full and part-time courses. Over the past three years, the size of the higher education student body has grown steadily from 551 students, amounting to 397 full-time equivalents (FTEs), in 2006-07 to 667 (479 FTEs) in 2008-09. The new University Centre is an integrated facility managed by the University and strategic growth is planned jointly for the new initiative.

Students' contribution to the review, including the written submission

8 Students studying on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the Summative review team and produced a statement based on the input from student representatives from all the divisions in the College. It was succinct and evaluative. During the review, the team held a productive meeting with representative students.

B Evaluation of the management of HEFCE-funded higher education

Core theme 1: Academic standards

How are responsibilities for managing and delivering higher education standards delegated within the management structure and what reporting arrangements are in place?

9 The higher education provision consists mainly of franchises of existing university courses, although there are a small number of validated programmes that have been developed by the College, mainly in the engineering and furniture areas. A number of courses are part of networked provision offered by other north west colleges in partnership with the University. The current memorandum of cooperation is dated December 2004 and it needs to be updated in order to reflect fully the move to the new campus. However, as it stands, it makes clear the principles for the maintenance and management of academic standards, including assessment and examination arrangements. The combination of the long-standing partnership, a single awarding body, the predominance of franchising and the physical proximity give clarity to the University/College relationship.

10 The University is responsible for the standards of the higher education awards and its quality systems apply to all higher education programmes in the College, but the College and University have their own management and monitoring and reporting structures. The interface and integration between these structures is clearly articulated so that roles and responsibilities are complementary and supportive.

11 An assistant principal has overall responsibility for the higher education provision at the College. Along with the Higher Education Manager, programme leaders, Marketing

Manager and Student Services Manager, they form the Higher Education Group which meets twice per term. This group also receives minutes from the Higher Education Course Representatives Committee.

12 The Assistant Principal and the Higher Education Manager meet weekly to discuss issues and developments. The College has worked hard to implement a more effective committee structure for the management of higher education. However, this is still at a developmental stage and is now starting to become embedded within the organisation. These meetings facilitate the alignment of the agendas and actions from the Higher Education Group and the Higher Education Management Group, as well as enabling a flow of information regarding higher education to and from the senior management team of the College. The College Quality Committee meets four times per year and also informs the senior management team. The Assistant Principal and Higher Education Manager also meet with the University's Director of the Burnley Campus on a fortnightly basis. The Director also has a standing invitation to attend the Higher Education Management Group and the Higher Education Programme Leaders Group. The college Academic Management Committee also meets fortnightly during term time with standing agenda items that include higher education. As the current organisation is relatively recently constituted, the team recommends that the College considers consolidating and embedding further the committee structure and related reporting mechanisms.

13 Each teaching division within the College has a curriculum manager responsible for its higher education provision, and reviews its higher education programmes twice per year through Higher Education Quality Review meetings. The Higher Education Manager is responsible for checking that action follows the production of the Quality Review Meeting reports. Course leaders prepare annual course monitoring reports and submit them to the Higher Education Manager and on to the relevant university heads of school through the Partnership Development Office and the overall process is highly effective.

14 Link tutors or course leaders from the University host a school visit at least once per year to meet with students to review their experience of the programme, answer questions and promote progression. Link tutors attend and often chair course assessment boards. They also audit the module boxes to ensure that they meet University requirements. College liaison meetings provide an opportunity for college teaching teams to meet the corresponding university teams.

What account is taken of the Academic Infrastructure?

15 The Planning and Advisory Group meets annually to consider the strategic direction of the portfolio of higher education programmes offered by the College. This comprises of senior staff of the University and the College. Once initial support has been given, the programme team, in liaison with the Higher Education Manager and with the relevant University School, submits a formal course proposal. On acceptance, the course team then develop the appropriate documentation in line with the requirements of the University Academic Quality Assurance Manual. Course approval panels have responsibility to ensure conformity to both internal regulations and external influences; the Academic Infrastructure is explicitly identified as one such influence. The requirements of the *Code of practice, Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)* are also addressed in annual monitoring. The University's Academic Quality and Standards Unit has responsibility for monitoring changes to the Academic Infrastructure and for informing and advising the network partners accordingly.

How does the College assure itself that it is fulfilling its obligations to ensure that the standards of higher education provision meet the requirements of validating partners and awarding bodies?

16 In line with university quality assurance processes, the College requires the completion of annual monitoring reports at course, subject and institutional level. These are scrutinised by the Higher Education Manager and Assistant Principal and by a peer review process involving curriculum managers, prior to being sent to the University. This review informs the production of a college level report. When the University produces its response to the College, the Higher Education Manager has a responsibility to disseminate this information internally and to check that any points of issue are addressed. The team found that the process was effectively implemented across all programmes.

17 The College is committed to ensuring that all courses comply with the assessment regulations of the University, and follows the specific assessment processes agreed by the host school. Consequently, all assessments set are consistent with the assessment detailed in the validated module descriptor. Work is submitted by students in line with the academic regulations and protocols agreed with the school, including extensions and extenuating circumstances. Work submitted for assessment is first marked by the internal module staff using an agreed marking and feedback sheet. All modules are then subject to moderation, by members of the university team and, where appropriate, other colleges who are part of the networked provision, in line with the procedure set out by the host school. College staff are equal partners in this moderation process. A full set of grades, plus samples of work, are then sent to the external examiner. College staff attend the relevant module and course assessment boards and heads of department chair these meetings for validated programmes.

18 Students complete module questionnaires and the format encourages a detailed response to specific questions. The completed questionnaires allow the College and University to gain feedback on the students learning experience. The results from the questionnaires are rigorously monitored as part of the annual monitoring process for which a report is produced. Actions relating to the findings of the module questionnaires are detailed in each report.

19 External examiners' reports are received by the Higher Education Manager from the University and the report, along with the manager's comments, is then forwarded to the relevant course leader and curriculum manager/s for consideration, action, and inclusion of points within the Annual Course Monitoring Report. External examiner reports confirm that appropriate academic standards are achieved and maintained by the College. The team found that external examiners comments were acted on appropriately and in a timely fashion.

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

20 It is a condition of appointment that all permanent teaching staff hold, or are willing to work towards, an appropriate professional teaching qualification. New staff are assigned a mentor and undertake a two-day induction programme, this was found to be both comprehensive and invaluable to those staff. All teaching teams are approved by the University at validation and any changes in staffing are notified to the Higher Education Manager, who forwards a curriculum vitae to the university host school for approval. Such changes are also identified in the annual course monitoring reports.

21 Staff teaching on higher education programmes become associate lecturers of the University and obtain a university identity card and access rights to all campus facilities. All staff have a personal and professional development plan and staff entitlement to development activities is outlined in the staff handbook.

22 As part of their annual appraisal, all higher education tutors complete a training needs analysis in consultation with their line manager. The appraisal scheme also includes input from classroom observation. In addition, higher education staff are encouraged to carry out peer observations. This is formally built into the induction process for new staff and for those undertaking initial teacher training, but is currently being piloted by Health and Social Development and considered for more widespread usage. Staff who had used the system had found it to be beneficial. The college Staff Development and Training Manager is responsible for compiling the staff development business plan from the individual training needs analyses and those revealed by the course review system. The plan is then presented to the Senior Management Team and Governing Body. Following approval, the plan is circulated to all managers, programme leaders and staff. The team found evidence that this was operating effectively.

23 In order to achieve higher level qualifications, college staff are encouraged to follow an appropriate course of study at the University. The College has a comprehensive staff development programme and support staff both financially and through remission of teaching time. In 2008-09, the College supported 33 members of staff on such courses of direct relevance to their higher education work. More recent evidence indicates that this process continues to support staff. The team considers that the extensive support given to college staff to improve their qualifications by undertaking appropriate courses of study at the University is an aspect of good practice.

24 The College requires higher education tutors to attend all relevant meetings at the University and will pay for teaching cover where necessary. College staff are also encouraged to attend both general and course specific training events at the University. In addition, specific higher education staff development events are held at the College. College staff also take part in activities organised by the associate colleges staff development network. Recently, a college-wide swap shop event was organised, which involved a wide range of staff sharing good practice across levels and programme areas. This proved to be a highly effective learning opportunity for all attendees and will now form part of an annual staff development programme. The team considers that within the College, the swap shop sessions and the extensive team teaching are very effective mechanisms for the sharing of good practice. The College recognises the value of scholarly activity and is seeking to encourage higher education tutors to undertake a range of scholarly activities to further promote research-informed teaching and learning.

The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities as set out in its partnership agreements, for the management and delivery of the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.

Core theme 2: Quality of learning opportunities

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

25 The Teaching and Learning Strategy clearly sets out college and university expectations for staff teaching on their programmes. It also acts as a blueprint and repository

for teaching methodologies that new or existing teachers may wish to consult when planning teaching and learning activities. The college quality assurance process document details the classroom observation system and ensures that all staff, whether full or part-time, fractional or hourly paid, are observed. Staff teaching on higher education programmes are observed by a manager familiar with higher education teaching processes and requirements. Observations are graded and any member of staff receiving an unsatisfactory grade will be re-observed following appropriate staff development and mentoring. This modification of the standard college process for staff teaching on higher education programmes helps to ensure that teaching and learning at this level is formally monitored and improved. The teaching experience is further enhanced by regular access to guest speakers from industry which adds context around the expectation of industry to their studies. Students commented on how this enhanced their learning opportunities and some expressed the wish for more of this type of involvement from industry.

26 External examiners and written feedback to students confirm that staff provide comprehensive, timely and effective summative feedback to all students to enable them to enhance their achievement. Formative feedback is used effectively by learners to enable them to improve final submissions. Students are very happy with the level of feedback they receive and are particularly positive about the quality of verbal feedback offered. They consider that verbal feedback tends to be more immediate and in consequence allows them to quickly process change to aid their learning and achievement.

27 External examiner reports are positive and complimentary about the attainment levels of students and the quality of teaching. Students who the team met were also very complimentary of the quality of teaching and learning, stating how lecturers tailor their sessions to the learning styles of the whole group. They particularly praised the lecturers who use video cameras in practical sessions and then immediately upload the material to the college virtual learning environment for students to access later. Part-time students also found this method very useful in helping to extend their learning.

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

28 All students take part in an induction programme which is made up of two parts. The first part is a generic university and college induction which provides students with welcome introductions, campus tours, library and virtual learning environment introductions. The welcome introduction involves a presentation delivered by key members of the college and university senior managers detailing the process of induction. The second part is a course specific induction where, among other things, students are talked through their course handbooks, are given information on relevant policies and procedures and, if appropriate, equipment inductions. Returning students have an abridged induction delivered through the tutorial system. Students confirmed to the team that the overall college induction process is both comprehensive and highly effective.

29 Students are allocated a year and personal tutor, plus a module tutor for each module. Their tutorial entitlement is one hour per week. Students meet their tutor regularly, and weekly tutorials are formally timetabled. In many instances the actual time set aside for tutorial often exceeds the college minimum expectation. The team and students confirmed that the arrangements for tutorial support are excellent and high effective.

30 The College operate a personal development planning programme which supports student achievement. This programme is delivered in three periods throughout the year: the first is at the beginning of the course and focuses on students completing a skills audit and action planning; the second is a semester one review; and the third an end-of-year review. The process is repeated in each subsequent year of study. The process is standardised and used across higher education provision and formalises the College's

support systems. Students are highly complementary of the college tutorial and linked personal development plan process, stating that it helps them manage their learning in a reflective way.

31 The College has effective and accessible academic support services, including workshops which enable students to gain access to additional support for study skills, and assignment writing. The jointly developed WISER support programme on the university website offers online support for students, including workshop and tutorial sessions designed by university and college staff. In addition, all divisions provide additional support workshops within the course hours in a way that best meets the students' needs. The team considered that excellent all round support for students is provided by the College and that it leads to enhanced student achievement.

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

32 Teaching and support staff are appropriately qualified in their discipline and for the level they are teaching or supporting. New staff commencing employment at the College are required to enrol on a relevant teaching qualification in accordance with college policy. The University has a minimum required qualification level, as detailed by university quality policies, and staff development opportunities to achieve this are provided by the College and University. Many staff are actively engaged in and are working towards higher level qualifications.

33 The College offers a range of specific higher education staff development opportunities, offering a centralised cross-college specific programme that consider systems, policies and procedures. Overarching the college staff development programme is an initiative called the Skills For Excellence Programme, which is an integral part in developing the whole college staff development initiative. This has transformed the culture of the College and has helped staff to share good practice across programmes and the College.

How does the College ensure the sufficiency and accessibility of the learning resources the students need to achieve the intended learning outcomes for their programmes?

34 A variety of mechanisms are in place for listening to and acting upon students' views, and a high level of importance is given to feedback from students. These mechanisms include face-to-face opportunities for students to meet with college governors, managers, and course staff to provide feedback. Feedback of this nature is mostly captured in student representative and staff-student liaison meetings. Written feedback is also collected through module evaluation questionnaires; student surveys, including the National Student Survey; and more recently in the student written submissions for the Developmental engagement and Summative review. Outcomes from student voice activities are documented in annual monitoring reports and students become aware of the response to their comments through minutes of staff-student liaison committees. These minutes are subsequently shared with students in follow-up student representative meetings with the student body. Students reported that 'you said, we did' posters in the Students' Union also provide feedback regarding learning resources and subsequent action taken. Students commented that the various mechanisms that allow them to express their opinions are useful and productive in bringing about change.

35 Students studying on higher education courses have a separate university library on campus, with opening hours from 9 am to 8 pm Monday to Thursday, and on Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. Although students consider the library to be well stocked with a range of

physical and electronic resources, including access to online resources, they did express their wish for the opening hours to be extended, particularly at the start of the day when they would like to access information technology resources in the library to complete and print off work before classes start. Students also noted that the library space is quite small and can be noisy during busy periods. They also expressed a need for some quiet space to be set aside so that they could concentrate without distraction. This was evidenced by the team following a tour of University Campus facilities. The team considers it desirable to explore opportunities to extend access to the library and to provide more quiet working spaces.

36 Students also benefit from access to the University's student portal, which includes the WISER programme of study skills support workshops together with online resources which are developed in collaboration between the College and the University. Students valued this support highly.

37 The majority of taught sessions take place in the higher education wing of the newly built joint higher education campus. Higher education students also have full access to university facilities. Physical resources for courses are excellent and the students praised the quality and accessibility. A central capital bidding system is in place for the acquisition of new resources, although this is normally agreed as part of the programme validation process. Consumables and smaller items of new equipment are usually sourced through departmental budgets. Information technology software and hardware is updated regularly and workspaces provide students with industry-comparable learning and working environments.

38 Many courses involve employers in the design of assessment, and an increasing number of courses are exploring ways of involving staff in the workplace in the delivery of assessment. This results in enhanced skills that support student employability and assessment activities that match relevant subject benchmark statements and occupational standards. Students engage regularly with employers as part of their courses, including work placements. For example, Foundation Degree Music and Media students work directly with local radio stations designing jingles and associated continuity materials. Public services engage with the army, police and fire service, and students on sports courses work with various sport governing bodies. Students confirmed that the involvement of employers in their programmes is key to their development, utilising work-related resources and prepares them for work in the industry.

The team concludes that it has confidence in the College's management of its responsibilities for the quality of the learning opportunities, as required by the awarding body, to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Core theme 3: Public information

What information is the College responsible for publishing about its HEFCE-funded higher education?

39 Responsibility for publishing information about courses is shared between the College and the University. The College has recently formed The Burnley Culture and Communication Group to promote a shared ethos, develop collaborative communications, marketing and promotions strategies, steer developments and include representation from institutions.

40 Pre-course information for potential students includes the informative joint prospectus and a well signposted website with a dedicated University Campus area. The prospectus features courses delivered by the College as well as courses directly delivered by the University. It contains a range of highly useful information.

41 Student handbooks are clear, informative and valued by students and include helpful information about assessment, sources of support, guidance and student responsibilities. All also include useful links, for example to the University Complaints Procedure and Student Regulations. Module information guidance and assessment briefs are very clear, support students through the assessment process and encourage peer and collaborative learning. A useful range of leaflets to inform students of the support available to them are published by the University in collaboration with the College. Students find the information available invaluable, although the 'This Way Up' guide to assessment, produced by university students, was considered less useful.

42 A helpful introduction to different levels of course, together with useful information about finance, facilities, and the full range of support available, are clearly presented. Useful links are included, for example to the university library and to the informative University of Lancaster 'Ask the 'I' website.

43 Handbooks for mentors and work-based supervisors are clear and informative. Respective roles are identified together with information pertinent to the course, for example theories to support observations in the case of teacher training learning.

44 For the majority of programmes, assessment materials, including student handbooks, programme specifications, module guides and assessment briefs, are available electronically. The virtual learning environment is used to excellent effect by some courses. For example, the innovative podcast 'assignment overview', available to students on the FdA Theatre and performance programme, provides guidance about current assessment, and there are links to websites on which student performances are showcased, together with online forums and communities.

**What arrangements does the College have in place to assure the accuracy and completeness of information the College has responsibility for publishing?
How does the College know that these arrangements are effective?**

45 The checking process for the development and joint approval of the prospectus and marketing material are clearly set out. Arrangements for franchised, validated and networked provision are all subject to similar checking processes by the University. The Marketing Department provides templates which module teaching staff complete and contents are checked within each division for completeness and accuracy. Proofs are also checked by the University. Approved information is uploaded to the college website by the Marketing Department.

46 The College provides learners with course and module handbooks. Course handbooks are jointly produced by a team from the University and College and are distributed to all higher education students on campus. A shorter version of the handbook is given to continuing students. The students deem the handbook to be useful, especially during induction, but consider the module handbooks the definitive documents in supporting their learning. Student handbooks contain details of course structure, simplified module outlines, tutorial and learning support, assessment and marking procedures, opportunities for claiming accreditation of prior learning, library resources, plus other generic and course-specific information. The inclusion of programme specifications is very variable across programme. Some handbooks contain no evidence of a programme specification with

no reference as to how the student may find it. The College has a handbook review system that includes a checklist for the information that is included in course handbooks. This is carried out by a reviewer on the college Higher Education Quality Enhancement Group. Part of the check includes a section in which the reviewer has to confirm that a programme specification is included in the handbook. Reviewers noted that on occasions the programme specification is confirmed as being included, but upon examination of the final handbook there is no evidence of it being incorporated. The team considers it desirable that the College further develops the handbook review system to ensure that all necessary information, such as programme specifications, is included.

47 Responsibility for uploading information to the virtual learning environment rests with module leaders and course managers. There is no formal minimum requirement for course material on the virtual learning environment. However, there is an expectation that handbooks, module guides, programme specifications, schemes of work and course timetables are available. Content is not currently subject to any internal quality audit. While the absence of programme specifications on the virtual learning environment was quickly remedied when noted early in the review visit, a robust formal checking procedure would have identified this and enabled the matter to be addressed earlier. The team considers it desirable that the College devises checking procedures to ensure key course information is available on the virtual learning environment. Currency of materials is monitored by a virtual learning environment administrator who works with staff to remove any out-of-date material.

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

C Summary of findings from the Developmental engagement in assessment

48 The Developmental engagement in assessment took place in January 2010. There were three lines of enquiry: the extent to which the College's quality assurance processes ensure that appropriate academic standards are maintained; the extent to which the quality of assessment feedback to students contributes to learning opportunities; and the extent to which the information available to students accurately informs them about assessment.

49 The Developmental engagement team identified a number of areas of good practice. There was a productive partnership with the University of Central Lancashire; comprehensive quality assurance procedures were in place; the engagement of programme teams with employers was commended; and there had been some innovative developments in assessment. The best examples of assessment were varied and linked with clear developmental feedback; and there were many employer-related assessment activities. There was an attractive higher education prospectus; and there were examples of clear and comprehensive assessment documentation.

50 The team also made a number of recommendations. It considered that the College should develop further a formal assessment strategy; facilitate the sharing of good practice on a college-wide basis; ensure the inclusion of formative assessment across all programmes; and ensure the accuracy and completeness of information for students. The College might benefit from standardising the format and timing of feedback to students

and improving the information about work-based learning and the use of the virtual learning environment.

51 The team were satisfied that all points raised in the Developmental engagement action plan have been fully addressed. Many of the issues have been implemented and embedded within the institution to enhance the management of higher education.

D Foundation Degrees

52 The College offers a wide and growing range of Foundation Degrees. It strongly believes that they form an integral part of the curriculum pathways that enable progression from further education to higher education studies in vocational areas. It is identifying new vocational routes and meeting the needs of higher level apprenticeships, employees and those currently under-represented. The team confirms the care taken to support the approval of new Foundation Degrees, including the full involvement of employers, which aligns clearly with the advice in the *Foundation Degree qualification benchmark*.

53 The College plans to develop more flexible, part-time and work-based provision to meet the needs of employers and employees. This will integrate blended learning in the delivery methodology, particularly for health and social care, and design and technology. It is currently developing new Foundation Degrees in Leadership and Management and End of Years Care to meet identified needs.

54 All subsequent conclusions relate equally to Foundation Degrees offered by the College.

E Conclusions and summary of judgements

55 The Summative review team has identified a number of features of good practice in Burnley College's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the College offers on behalf of its awarding body. This was based upon discussion with staff and students and scrutiny of evidence provided by the College and its awarding body, the University of Central Lancashire.

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

- the extent of support given to college staff to improve their qualifications by appropriate courses of study within the University of Central Lancashire is extensive and apparent across all programmes, resulting in high quality teaching and assessment (paragraph 23).
- the use of various mechanisms, such as the swap shop and extensive team teaching, are highly effective in sharing good practice (paragraph 24).
- the excellent all-round support for students provided by the College, which leads to enhanced student achievement (paragraphs 29 to 31)
- the informative joint prospectus and clearly signposted website with a dedicated University Campus area are valued by students and employers (paragraph 40).

57 The team considers that it is **desirable** for the College to:

- update the current memorandum of cooperation to reflect fully the move to the new campus (paragraph 9)

- consider the consolidation and further embedding of the committee structure and consequential reporting mechanisms (paragraph 12)
- explore opportunities to extend access to the library and to provide more quiet working spaces (paragraph 35)
- further develop the handbook review system to ensure that all necessary information, such as programme specifications, is included (paragraph 46)
- devise checking procedures to ensure key course information is available on the virtual learning environment (paragraph 47).

58 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the standards of the awards of its awarding bodies.

59 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that it has **confidence** that, in the context of this Summative review, the College discharges its responsibilities effectively, as set out in the relevant partnership agreement for the management of the quality of learning opportunities to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

60 Based upon its analysis of the College's self-evaluation, and other documentary evidence and from its meetings with staff and students, the team concludes that, in the context of this Summative review, reliance **can** be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the College is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Burnley College action plan relating to the Summative review: February 2011						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
In the course of the Summative review the team identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the extent of support given to college staff to improve their qualifications by appropriate courses of study within the University of Central Lancashire is extensive and apparent across all programmes, resulting in high quality teaching and assessment (paragraph 23) 	Continue current good practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify appropriate staff for higher qualifications support for staff via the 'long courses' panel 	Sept 2011	Higher Education Manager with Staff Development Manager	Continued support for higher education staff to achieve higher qualifications PG Dip in Education available at Burnley Campus	Assistant Principal (Higher Education)	Appraisal staff development records Long course panel reports Observation records
	Further develop practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> negotiate to host University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) Postgraduate Diploma in Education in Burnley to facilitate attendance 	Dec 2011	Teacher Education and Professional Development Manager	Success rates maintained at >85%	Higher Education Manager	Success rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of various mechanisms, such as the swap shop and extensive team teaching, are highly effective in 	Continue and extend current good practice, for example : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> higher education involvement in cross-college staff 	Dec 2011	Higher Education Manager with Staff Development Manager	Increase higher education participation/focus in cross-college staff development	Assistant Principal (Higher Education)	Staff development evaluations Student Survey results/MEQ's

sharing good practice (paragraph 24)	- development develop enhanced higher education teaching observation scheme to capture further good practice for dissemination	Apr 2012	Quality Manager with Higher Education Manager	Improved student feedback Increase number of observations take place in higher education settings	Higher Education Management Group	Observation records
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the excellent all-round support for students provided by the College, which leads to enhanced student achievement (paragraph 29 to 31) 	Maintain and extend on and off-course support mechanisms	Dec 2011	Higher Education Manager with Director of Campus	Maintain full-time and part-time achievement rates in excess of 95%	Assistant Principal (Higher Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student campus handbook Student Surveys and MEQ's Annual Monitoring reports Achievement rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the informative joint prospectus and clearly signposted website with a dedicated University Campus area are valued by students and employers (paragraph 40). 	<p>Produce new joint higher education prospectus for 2012 entry</p> <p>Refine and update university section of website, especially with regard to new finance arrangements</p>	<p>June 2011</p> <p>Dec 2011</p>	Marketing Manager with curriculum managers	<p>High Quality Prospectus produced to deadline</p> <p>Website updated with enhanced information and guidance, especially about finance</p>	Culture and Communications Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prospectus Website UCLan report on Annual Monitoring Culture and Communications minutes

Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is desirable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> update the current memorandum of cooperation to reflect fully the move to the new campus (paragraph 9) 	Approve updated memorandum of cooperation between Burnley College and UCLan	May 2011	Assistant Principal with UCLan Director of Advancement	Updated Memorandum of Cooperation between Burnley College and UCLan approved and signed by both parties	Principal	Memorandum of Cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the consolidation and further embedding of the committee structure and consequential reporting mechanisms (paragraph 12) 	Review current committee structure and highlight appropriate reporting lines, especially with regard to the developing joint committees and/or those with joint representation	Dec 2011	Higher Education Manager	Committee structure with clearer indication of reporting lines and lines of responsibility	Assistant Principal (Higher Education)	Higher Education Quality System Committee structure Terms of Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore opportunities to extend access to the library and to provide more quiet working spaces (paragraph 35) 	Establish mechanisms to explore options for enhancing library and learning resource access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> student focus group meeting with UCLan library management team Higher Education Management Group strategic discussion 	Oct 2011	Higher Education Manager	Improved student satisfaction with library and learning resources	Assistant principal (Higher Education) and Higher Education Management Group	Focus Group Report Higher Education Management Group minutes Student satisfaction surveys

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> further develop the handbook review system to ensure that all necessary information, such as programme specifications, is included (paragraph 46) 	<p>Review and develop the process piloted in 2011 for monitoring and enhancing the quality of student handbooks</p> <p>Ensure all relevant staff are aware of minimum requirements and best practice</p>	Oct 2011	Higher Education Quality Enhancement Group	<p>All handbooks reviewed</p> <p>All handbooks contain all necessary information</p>	Higher Education Manager	<p>Higher Education Quality documentation</p> <p>Course and module handbooks</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> devise checking procedures to ensure key course information is available on the virtual learning environment (paragraph 47). 	<p>Review and develop the process piloted in 2011 for monitoring and enhancing the quality of student handbooks and incorporate parallel system for checking virtual learning environment</p> <p>Guidelines and checklist to be produced</p>	Oct 2011	Higher Education Quality Enhancement Group	Improved virtual learning environment course sites that reflect best practice	Higher Education Manager	<p>Quality Enhancement Reports</p> <p>Virtual learning environment course pages</p>

RG 713 05/11

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Southgate House
Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 1UB

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