Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) of Christ the Redeemer College

February 2016

Contents

About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Christ the Redeemer College. The review took place from 10 to 11 February 2016 and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Ann Kettle
- Joanne Coward.

The main purpose of the review was to investigate the higher education provided by Christ the Redeemer College and to make judgements as to whether or not its academic standards and quality meet UK expectations. These expectations are the statements in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)[1] setting out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and of each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

In Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) the QAA review team:

- makes judgements on
  - the setting and maintenance of academic standards
  - the quality of student learning opportunities
  - the information provided about higher education provision
  - the enhancement of student learning opportunities
- provides a commentary on the selected theme
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- affirms action that the provider is taking or plans to take.

In Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) there is also a check on the provider's financial sustainability, management and governance (FSMG). This check has the aim of giving students reasonable confidence that they should not be at risk of being unable to complete their course as a result of financial failure of their education provider.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. Explanations of the findings are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 5.

In reviewing Christ the Redeemer College the review team has also considered a theme selected for particular focus across higher education in England and Northern Ireland. The themes for the academic year 2015-16 are Student Employability, and Digital Literacy,[2] and the provider is required to select, in consultation with student representatives, one of these themes to be explored through the review process.

The QAA website gives more information about QAA and its mission.[3] A dedicated section explains the method for Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers).[4] For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

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[1] The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is published at: www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[2] Higher Education Review themes:
www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2859
[3] QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us.
[4] Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers):
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/RSCD.aspx

Key findings

QAA's judgements about Christ the Redeemer College

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision at Christ the Redeemer College.

- The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of its degree-awarding bodies and other awarding organisation **meets** UK expectations.
- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The quality of the information about learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The enhancement of student learning opportunities **requires improvement to meet** UK expectations.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at Christ the Redeemer College:

- the comprehensive support given to students for writing dissertations in particular the Dissertation Guidance Starter Pack (Expectation B4)
- the effective management of work placement learning which enhances the learning experience for students (Expectation B10).

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to Christ the Redeemer College.

By July 2016:

- ensure that each committee operates according to its terms of reference and its membership (Expectations A2.1; B1)
- introduce an overarching annual monitoring process which covers all the higher education provision (Expectation B8)
- ensure the currency of all information on the College's website (Expectation C)
- ensure a deliberate, explicit and systematic approach to Enhancement (Enhancement).

Affirmation of action being taken

The QAA review team **affirms** the following actions that the Christ the Redeemer College is already taking to make academic standards secure and/or improve the educational provision offered to its students:

- the steps being taken to ensure consistency in marking through staff training (Expectation B6).

Theme: Student Employability

The College's mission statement clearly states the commitment to student employability. The content of all programmes, the assessment and learning experiences of students are all geared to improving student employability. The well-organised work-experience programmes supports this process. Transferable skills are at the centre of learning, in particular,

communications, personal development and working with others. Students are very positive about the way the College encourages employability. A Careers Day is planned during this academic year.

Financial sustainability, management and governance

There were no material issues identified at Christ the Redeemer College during the financial sustainability, management and governance check.

Further explanation of the key findings can be found in the handbook available on the QAA webpage explaining Higher Education Review (AP).

About Christ the Redeemer College

The College's mission is to provide high quality, high value education to advance the leadership, ministerial and professional aims of its students in a competitive and dynamic global environment. Its aim is to offer the most positive learning experience possible in a setting that encourages and fosters friendliness and positive social engagement. It seeks to provide an engaging learning environment that fosters community and at the same time allows for individuality among the diverse student body. Its approach to training is targeted towards preparing students to become leaders in their chosen field of endeavour in business, employment or Christian ministry.

Major changes since the last QAA review

The College approached Pearson to obtain centre status and successfully applied to offer Higher National Diploma (HND) programmes. This was achieved on 26 February 2014 and the first students began studying in January 2015 and completed in December 2015. These students transferred from another college into the second year of the HND programme. There were nine students on this programme during 2015.

The phasing out of the partnership with Middlesex University began with the last intake for that programme in September 2014. All students registered with the University will continue to study at the College until they complete their programme. Currently there are 26 students on the programme. There is an agreed 'teach out' arrangement between the College and the University.

Key challenges

The College began looking for another university to validate its degree provision by approaching another university. After meeting with them a formal approach was made which was unsuccessful. The College then approached Roehampton University, with whom it had had in 2007 a progression agreement to recruit for its Foundation Degrees in Ministerial Studies. The College was not on that occasion involved in programme design, tuition or assessment. It previously withdrew from this arrangement when the relationship with Middlesex University commenced in 2009. The validation of three new programmes has been approved by Roehampton University for recruitment in September 2016.

Funding for the Pearson courses has been a challenge and the first intake is made up entirely of overseas students. Marketing of this programme has been suspended until student loans can be secured for UK applicants.

The College has secured new accommodation in Rayners Lane.

A key challenge of autumn 2014 surrounded issues that the College had with the Student Loans Company which resulted in the incoming students for the 2014-15 academic year being unable to obtain a loan. The College was able to clarify the situation and make an appropriate response to the Student Loans Company (SLC) that resulted in a satisfactory resolution of the situation in January 2015. In the interim period the College gave students every support, including continuing classes without charge, and approached other colleges for the students to transfer to them. Staff from the University also assisted in that process by arranging visits to other colleges in partnership with the University.

Implications of changes, challenges and strategic aims for safeguarding academic standards and the quality of students' learning opportunities

The College will ensure that there is an effective relationship with its new university partner. It will continue with a new management structure. This is based on the work of the Curriculum and Quality Committee, Recruitment and Admissions Committee and Publications Committee being absorbed into the Academic Board. This aims to enable more widely experienced staff to participate and input into the development of new programmes. Thie new management structure will be subject to review.

The College previously operated a three departmental/schools system: the School of Theology, the School of Business and Information Technology, and the School of Practical Ministries. To further streamline College activities and to enable better management of the learning environment and student experience this was reduced to two schools: the School of Theology and Practical Ministries and the School of Business and Information Technology.

To accommodate the proposed partnership with Roehampton University the College reviewed and updated its policies to ensure that it can continue to manage all the requirements of university-validated provision.

A decision was made to discontinue overseas recruitment due to the current climate, although existing overseas students will be supported until their graduation. This will also be a requirement of Roehampton University for any new arrangements with it.

The mechanism for monitoring the Student Loans Company payments was reviewed and, to streamline the internal processes to ensure accuracy of responses and confirmations of enrolment and attendance, the number of dedicated staff administering the SLC website was reduced.

The College has addressed all the recommendations following the Review for Educational Oversight (REO) in 2012. The annual monitoring report in 2013 confirmed that the action plan was making acceptable progress. The 2014 annual monitoring report found that progress was commendable. The College's response has been enthusiastic, although recent events have understandably impinged on its effectiveness. The College has built on the good practices, two of which continue to be good practice in this Review. The mapping of the Quality Code dates from 2013 and will be updated to include the Pearson and Roehampton University provisions.

Explanation of the findings about Christ the Redeemer College

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a brief glossary at the end of this report. A fuller glossary of terms is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the review method, also on the QAA website.

1 Judgement: The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations

Expectation (A1): In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:

a) ensure that the requirements of *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* are met by:

- **positioning their qualifications at the appropriate level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **ensuring that programme learning outcomes align with the relevant qualification descriptor in the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **naming qualifications in accordance with the titling conventions specified in the frameworks for higher education qualifications**
- **awarding qualifications to mark the achievement of positively defined programme learning outcomes**

b) consider and take account of QAA's guidance on qualification characteristics

c) where they award UK credit, assign credit values and design programmes that align with the specifications of the relevant national credit framework

d) consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.

Quality Code, *Chapter A1: UK and European Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.1   At the time of the review the College offered programmes validated by Middlesex University (Middlesex) and by Pearson. Following the termination of the programme validated by Middlesex, the College prepared a BA (Hons) Theology programme for submission to Roehampton University (Roehampton) for validation. With regard to the Middlesex programmes, due consideration was given at the initial validation to the FHEQ level descriptions and the relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and Middlesex has since made updates and amendments to the programme specification, including the ways in which module codes reflect FHEQ levels. For the Pearson programme the College was required to develop programme specifications that met the requirements of the Quality Code. Programme specifications for two Higher National Diploma (HND) awards were approved by Pearson.

1.2   As the College does not have degree awarding powers, its role is to support the maintenance of academic standards. In the matter of the allocation of awards to the appropriate level of the FHEQ or Qualifications and Credit Framework, the College's understanding is that the universities and Pearson have responsibility for ensuring that each award is allocated explicitly to the appropriate level.

The College's approach to taking account of the FHEQ and other reference points would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.3   The review team examined the Memorandum of Cooperation with Middlesex, and a range of programme and module specifications, including those prepared for validation by Roehampton. It reviewed student handbooks to verify that programmes delivered in collaboration with university partners and Pearson meet the FHEQ requirements. Teaching staff met by the team confirmed their familiarity with the FHEQ and relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and their importance in programme development. Students met by the team were clear about what was expected of them at different levels of study.

1.4   Overall the review team found that, within the context of its agreements, the College effectively discharges its responsibilities for allocating qualifications to the appropriate level of the FHEQ and alignment with the relevant Subject Benchmark Statements. The review team concludes therefore that the Expectation is met and that the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.1): In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.5   The College is required to adhere to the academic governance arrangements and regulations set out in the partnership agreements. In the case of Middlesex, the College's Academic Board is responsible for the monitoring of the validated provision using Middlesex's framework, which covers the initial approval of programmes, programme delivery, annual monitoring and review, assessment regulations, external examination and withdrawal of programmes. The main point of contact is between Middlesex and College link tutors. The academic framework includes Boards of Study which provide an opportunity for staff to discuss regulations and reference points.

1.6   The HND programmes are delivered in accordance with Pearson policies and procedures, including programmes specifications and guides to assessment. An Academic Committee is responsible for the monitoring of the Pearson provision and, in parallel with the Middlesex programme, a Board of Study has been established.

1.7   The design of these governance frameworks would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.8   The review team scrutinised memoranda of cooperation, academic management review reports, College committee terms of reference, membership and minutes, and external examiners' reports to check the operation of academic governance arrangements. The team met staff to confirm their understanding of the academic framework and assessment regulations.

1.9   Following the recent reduction in student numbers and the withdrawal of the Middlesex programmes, a number of subcommittees, including the Curriculum and Quality Committee and the Recruitment and Admissions Committee, have been subsumed within the Academic Board. It was the view of the Rector that streamlining academic governance had enabled academic staff to concentrate on developing the new programme for validation by Roehampton. The review team considers that, while the current academic framework is effective and is sufficient to meet the requirements of the universities and Pearson, the College may wish to review the structure once it begins to deliver the new programme.

1.10   The review team noted from the minutes of meetings of Academic Board, Academic Committee and the Boards of Study that the business conducted and the lists of those attending did not always correspond to the terms of reference and membership submitted to the team. While this discrepancy might be the consequences of the streamlining of the committee structure at a difficult time for the College, the team **recommends** that, when reviewing its governance structure and when student numbers rise, the College ensures that each committee operates according to its terms of reference and its membership.

1.11   The review team concludes that the governance and management procedures at the College are effective and the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is moderate because the College will need to restore its committee structure when new programmes recruit students.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

Expectation (A2.2): Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.12   For the provision validated by the universities, a programme specification contains the definitive record of programme requirements and includes information on programme content, design and delivery, and module content and assessment. The programme specification is included in a programme handbook which is updated annually, contains all necessary information about the delivery of the programme and has web links to university documents.

1.13   For the HND programmes, generic programme specifications, together with contextualised programme specifications developed by the College and approved by Pearson, set out how the programme will be delivered and assessed. Pearson have confirmed that the College has in place procedures for the timely and accurate registration of students and for the certification of claims.

1.14   The College is responsible for making the definitive records available to students and ensuring they are used as a reference point for the delivery of courses, including assessment. This is achieved mainly through induction programmes, student handbooks and guides to assessment.

1.15   The processes and procedures for the development, approval and maintenance of definitive programme records would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.16   To test the Expectation the review team examined partnership agreements and management reviews, definitive programme records, student handbooks and minutes of relevant meetings. To evaluate the effectiveness of procedures, meetings were held with senior staff, teaching staff and students.

1.17   The definitive programme documents include information about module specifications, intended learning outcomes, credits and information about assessment. Staff met by the review team demonstrated clear knowledge of the requirements of the awarding bodies and students confirmed that they used handbooks to access information about their programmes. The College demonstrates effective alignment with the academic framework and regulations of its universities.

1.18   The College ensures that the definitive programme records guide the delivery of the programmes and that students are made aware of their contents. The review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.1): Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.19   The universities and Pearson provide policies for the approval of programmes and modules. For programmes awarded by the universities, approval procedures are outlined in the Learning and Quality Enhancement Handbook. This Handbook contains guidelines for programme design as well as approval. Similarly, the programme specifications for programmes approved by Pearson use the awarding organisation's procedures for design and approval. The College's new awarding body, Roehampton, applied its approval mechanisms to validate programmes for delivery from September 2016. Each of the awarding bodies' policies ensure that consideration of threshold standards is as part of the approval process.

1.20   The monitoring and review of standards is undertaken through annual monitoring. For the Middlesex awards, this is managed at both programme and institutional levels. Middlesex requires the completion of an annual monitoring report using a prescribed template which is submitted to Middlesex for consideration. Pearson's procedures for the monitoring of standards are followed by the College. These procedures include the annual academic management review.

1.21   The guidelines provided by the respective awarding bodies and organisation are clear and have been implemented consistently across the College. For the Middlesex awards, while there is evidence of effective monitoring by the both the College and Middlesex, the prescribed template does not always allow opportunity for detailed analysis of provision. However, issues which have arisen have and are being managed well through the Boards of Study. The awards managed by Pearson have only been approved recently and there has been one annual monitoring report for the intake in January 2015. However, the College team is clear about what their responsibilities are in this regard and have suitably qualified staff to oversee and manage this aspect of monitoring.

1.22   The processes and procedures for ensuring the approval process meets the required standards would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.23   The team read and considered Middlesex's and Pearson processes for design and approval. Consideration was also given to the available annual monitoring reports, the meetings held with staff as well as a representative of one of Middlesex.

1.24   While the effectiveness of the monitoring of the programmes awarded by Pearson cannot be fully considered as the first assessment cycle has yet to be completed, there is sufficient evidence to show that the College is well experienced in following the processes outlined by Pearson. The College has considerable experience in this area having worked with a number of awarding bodies over the years and although the relationship with Middlesex is coming to an end, to be replaced by Roehampton, there are no concerns about the overall quality of the provision delivered by the College.

1.25   This combination of experience and proven track record in working appropriately with the University and Pearson leads to the conclusion that this expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.2): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where:

- **the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment**
- **both UK threshold standards and their own academic standards have been satisfied.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.26   The College operates approved programme specifications which outline both programme and module learning outcomes. Programme learning outcomes are embedded within module learning outcomes. Modules are designed with assessment that ensures that all programmes learning outcomes are met. The external examiner for Middlesex approves all summative assessment for modules at Levels 5 and 6, including dissertation topics. For the Pearson programmes, summative assessment is overseen by the assessment team and verified by the Internal Verifier.

1.27   The College follows the assessment policy laid out by each of its awarding bodies and there is evidence that, where applicable, these are effective. This would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.28   The team reviewed a range of evidence including external examiner reports and minutes of assessment boards and discussed aspects of the College's management of this expectation with staff and a representative of Middlesex.

1.29   College staff mark and second mark all assessment for the Middlesex and Pearson programmes using marking and grading criteria. Guidance for marking is provided to academic staff and is supported by staff development events to ensure consistency in marking standards**.** . Similarly, students are made aware of the marking criteria and the standard of work they need to achieve in order to meet the required thresholds.

1.30   For Middlesex programmes, a sample of Level 5 and 6 scripts is sent to the external examiner. The sample conforms to the University's regulations and includes all failed scripts and borderlines passes. Overall module marks are approved by the Middlesex's Assessment Board. A Finalists' Board is held to consider module grades, mitigating circumstances and also final classifications. This Board is attended by the External Examiner and is chaired by a senior member of the University. In the case of Middlesex University programmes, the process ensured that the external examiner was able to identify issues with marking consistency across modules.

1.31   For Pearson programmes, all assessment once marked is verified by the Internal Verifier. The external examiner makes an annual visit to the College to approve the award of credit but it is too soon in the cycle for this to have occurred as yet.

1.32   The College has ensured that it has key staff in place who are either Internal Verifiers or who are trained to a sufficient standard as to be able to ensure that the College's responsibilities in this area are clearly understood and followed. However, the issue with inconsistent marking standards suggests that at times policy is not being administered consistently. This aspect is explored further under Expectation B6. However, the expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.3): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are implemented which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Award*

Findings

1.33   Middlesex and Pearson have policies by which they ensure that the College meets the standards for the achievement and maintenance of threshold academic standards. Middlessex nd Pearson require the production of an annual report which is considered through the governance structure of the College. The College is required to produce annual reports using a standard template which ensure that the maintenance of standards is explicitly commented on. The College receives reports from its external examiners which ensures a level of externality through all the College's provision. These external examiner reports are incorporated into the annual monitoring and any issues raised in them are addressed.

1.34   The College's processes for the monitoring and review of programmes would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.35   The team examined the policies of Middlesex and Pearson in relation to the achievement and maintenance of standards, the monitoring reports themselves and the minutes of meetings at which these reports were considered. The team also discussed this aspect of College activity with members of College staff.

1.36   The use of the standard templates and the requirement that all external examiner reports are considered and commented on, allows each of the awarding bodies to be assured that academic standards are being achieved and maintained. The reports are considered at the College's Boards of Studies and Academic Board for the University programmes and there is the provision for consideration at the BTEC Academic Committee when the monitoring process reaches that stage.

1.37   There are well-established monitoring processes set in place by the College for monitoring and review. The College is clear about its responsibilities in this area and discharges them effectively. The Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.4): In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether:

- **UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved**
- **the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.38   The universities and Pearson use the external examiner system to ensure there is external, independent expertise deployed to ensure the setting and maintenance of academic standards. The external examiner appointed by Middlesex reviews and approves all assessment questions annually and in their report, are required to verify whether the appropriate standards and learning outcomes have been met. The external examiners also review a set sample of written work before their annual visit which includes all fail and borderline pass grades.

1.39   With Middlesex and Pearson, the College's use of external and independent expertise would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.40   The team examined and considered reports from external examiners from Middlesex which are currently operating at the College as well as other evidence provided by the College. The team also discussed this aspect of College provision with members of staff.

1.41   The annual report compiled by the external examiners follows a template supplied by Middlesex. The report is submitted to Middlesex for consideration and then is forwarded to the College for comment. The report is then considered by the Academic Board and a response, together with an action plan, is sent to the University. The external examiner's report is discussed at the November meeting of the Board of Study where it is made available to student representatives who are then able to disseminate it to the student body.

1.42   In addition, the Middlesex-appointed Link Tutor liaises with the College in the support of setting and maintaining standards. Likewise, Pearson appoints an external examiner to oversee its provision through the monitoring of standards and programme outcomes. Given the timing of this review, a full report, including confirmed student grades, was not available at the time of the review visit.

1.43   The processes set by Middlesex and Pearson have been rigorously followed by the College to ensure that standards are being appropriately set and maintained. These processes are working well and are able to identify issues of concern. The College has clear mechanisms for ensuring that it can respond effectively to issues that arise.

1.44   The College uses the input of external examiners effectively and there is clear evidence that issues identified in reports have been addressed. The Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations: Summary of findings

1.45   In reaching its judgement about the maintenance of academic standards, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook.

1.46   The College effectively follows the requirements of Middlesex and Pearson to maintain academic standards. These processes are supported by the College's own internal procedures and guidance.

1.47   All seven of the Expectations in this area are met and the level of associated risk is low for six Expectations. There is one recommendation regarding the operation of College committees when new programmes recruit students. The review team concludes that the maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of Middlesex and Pearson at the College **meets** UK expectations.

2   Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

Expectation (B1): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes

Quality Code, *Chapter B1: Programme Design and Approval*

Findings

2.1   The College's Academic Board is responsible for the strategic oversight of developments at College level and for ensuring compliance with the policies and guidance as laid out by the universities and Pearson. For its undergraduate degree provision, the Middlesex's Learning and Quality Enhancement Handbook details the roles, responsibilities and processes for programme design, development and approval. Middlesex updates this manual on an annual basis. The College uses this manual effectively to support the development and design of programmes.

2.2   The College is also an approved Pearson centre and developed policies and procedures for the programme design as part of the centre approval process. The College designed and developed the core modules approved as part of the HND provision with optional modules being Pearson designed and approved modules.

2.3   From September 2016, the College will deliver a suite of programmes awarded by Roehampton and the College effectively used this opportunity to fundamentally review and redesign its provision, involving subject experts, externals and students.

2.4   The College has effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes which would allow the expectation to be met.

2.5   The team tested this expectation through the examination of minutes of the Board of Study and Academic Board and the document Design and Development of Programmes, and through meetings with staff and students.

2.6   For all its provision, the College uses Subject Benchmark Statements, the relevant universities' and Pearson regulations, religious organisations and experts in validation as external reference points in programme design and development.

2.7   The College ensures that there is student input into the development of its academic provision. Students have opportunities to contribute to programme design through student representation at Academic Board, Boards of Studies, module feedback forums and periodic surveys.

2.8   The College, working with each of the universities and Pearson, has appropriate mechanisms in place for the design and development of new provision. The academic staff are well qualified and experienced in developing modules and programmes following the guidance of the respective awarding bodies. They ensure that design has the input of externals and the student body. The College's Academic Board has terms of reference which state its overall oversight of design and approval at an institutional level. However, the minutes of the Academic Board do not always reflect the level of oversight depicted in the terms of reference.

2.9   There are effective processes in place to ensure that the College meets this Expectation. The staff talked in detail of the process which they undertook for the review and design of the new programmes to be awarded by Roehampton University. College staff are cognisant of the Quality Code, the requirements of Middlesex and Pearson as well as incorporating the feedback of students. While there are effective processes in place, the College should ensure that the business managed by the Academic Board accurately reflects its terms of reference (see also A2.1). However, the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B2): Recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.

Quality Code, *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission*

Findings

2.10   The College is responsible for the recruitment of students to both the Pearson and Middlesex awards. No students have been admitted to higher education programmes since January 2015 and the College has recently decided to suspend the recruitment of international students indefinitely. There are policies in place for the accreditation of prior learning for the Middlesex and Pearson programmes but neither is currently in operation.

2.11   The College has a recruitment and admissions policy which is reviewed annually and displayed on the website. Some revisions have been made to the policy following concerns in annual monitoring reports about low progression and completion rates and suggestions from external examiners that the College may have been admitting students who did not have the ability to complete the programme. In response, the College asked applicants for entry in September 2014 to complete a short test to enable assessment of their writing skills. From 2016, it intends to require all applicants who do not have GCSE grade A-C in English to take the Cambridge Proficiency Certificate in English at level B2 and to provide a typed personal statement with their application.

2.12   Under College procedures, successful applicants are required to attend enrolment where their qualifications are checked for authenticity. Induction takes place in the first week of the programme when students receive information on the structure and content of their programme, assessment arrangements and access to library resources and the virtual learning environment (VLE).

2.13   The design of the processes for recruitment, selection and admission would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.14   The review team tested the Expectation by examining the College's admissions policy and related documents and minutes of the Boards of Study and the Academic Board. The team discussed the implementation of recruitment, selection and admissions of students through meetings with staff and students.

2.15   The review team found that recruitment, selection and admissions processes had been operated effectively before their suspension. The College has an admissions policy that adheres to the principles of fair admission and which has been revised to meet the concerns about progression and retention. The College will review the admissions policy before students are admitted to the Roehampton programmes. Roehampton intends to review all applications before offers of admission are made by the College. Students the review team met spoke highly of admission and induction procedures.

2.16   The admissions process is fair, transparent, reliable and valid. It is underpinned by organisational processes and structures. The College reviews its processes regularly and is currently doing this with reference to Roehampton. As such the review team concludes that the expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B3): Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*

Findings

2.17   The academic staff of the College are appointed for their subject knowledge and teaching experience and are encouraged to acquire a teaching qualification in higher education. All teaching staff on the Middlesex programmes have a doctorate or master's degree or are working towards one of them and most have experience of teaching theology. The University checks the qualifications of all new teaching staff. In the case of the Pearson programmes, the qualifications of teaching staff were reviewed as part of the approval process.

2.18   The College has a staff development policy with the aim of enhancing the performance and encouraging the personal development of all staff. Staff are appraised annually in order to identify training needs. Timetable adjustments are made for staff undertaking a postgraduate teaching qualification and the College also makes a contribution towards fees. Scholarly activity is encouraged and the College publishes its own theology journal, with some student involvement. Staff keep a record of professional staff development activities undertaken.

2.19   Academic staff take part in annual peer review of teaching to enable them both to identify and share good teaching practice and also to identify areas for improvement. Peer review, which is based on a Middlesex model, has also been adopted in place of lesson observation for staff teaching on the Pearson programmes. Satisfaction with teaching is monitored by student surveys and in meetings of Boards of Studies.

2.20   The processes for the appointment and management of teaching staff and for obtaining feedback from students on their learning experience would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.21   The review team tested the Expectation by the examination of policies on the appointment and development of academic staff, on peer review of teaching and lesson observation and student feedback. Meetings were held with students, teaching and senior staff to evaluate the operation of the policies.

2.22   All teaching staff are well qualified, with several engaged in scholarly activity. Their performance is monitored by appraisal and peer review of teaching and, within financial constraints, they are offered training and opportunities for professional development. Teaching staff met by the review team spoke highly of their experiences of peer review and were able to provide examples of both formal and informal dissemination of good practice in teaching and learning. They were also able to demonstrate how external reference points such as the Quality Code and Subject Benchmark Statements informed and enhanced their teaching.

2.23   Staff use a wide range of teaching and learning methods, including discussion groups, problem-solving exercises, student presentations and technology-based tasks. This variety was commended in the validation report of the Roehampton University programme.

It was also appreciated by students who met the team and spoke highly of the ability of their teachers.

2.24   The College has an effective approach to learning and teaching, staff are appraised and supported in scholarly activities. Students speak positively about their learning experiences.

2.25   The review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B4): Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

Quality Code, *Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement*

Findings

2.26   The College enables student development and achievement by a variety of formal and informal arrangements. Training in study and transferable skills is embedded in programmes. Students are introduced to personal development planning during induction and cannot progress without making acceptable progress with recording their development and completing a reflective journal. Theology students are required to undertake work placements as part of their programme (see also Expectation B10).

2.27   In addition to the academic support provided by module tutors, students meet personal tutors regularly who offer pastoral advice and help. Student attendance is carefully monitored and personal tutors contact persistent absentees before their attendance falls below the minimum allowed for participation in assessment. Support is available for students with special needs and the College has a trained counsellor available free of charge.

2.28   Learning resources are kept under review and the College aims to make available at least two copies of textbooks recommended in the module specifications of the new Roehampton programme. Students are also encouraged to make use of the libraries of other theological colleges. The College has recently taken out a subscription to an electronic library which provides students with access to thousands of books and journal articles via the website. The College's VLE is populated with learning materials for all programmes and students are provided with a guide to electronic resources accessible by links in the VLE. Student use of it is monitored and reports on usage are made to the Boards of Study. There is an E-Learning Handbook for Resources which provides students with clear guidance on the availability and use of learning resources.

2.29   The College has arrangements for enabling student progression in place to allow the Expectation to be met.

2.30   To test the Expectation the review team examined programme specifications and handbooks, teaching materials and the minutes of relevant committee meetings. Meetings with senior staff, teaching and support staff, and students gave the team the opportunity to assess the operation of arrangements for student development and achievement.

2.31   The arrangements for the academic and personal support of students are effective. A student submission for this review reported general satisfaction with the learning and studying environment and students met by the review team reported that they received considerable help from tutors whom they recognise to be very well qualified and experts in their discipline. Students are clearly benefiting from the small numbers remaining on the Middlesex programme. There is a guide, Presenting Your Work, which provides students with helpful support for writing assignments. Students are required to produce a Reflection Journal which staff use to monitor students' progress.

2.32   The support given to students on completing their final year dissertations is outstanding. A Dissertation Guidance Starter Pack provides clear and comprehensive guidance on writing a dissertation from choice of topic to binding and submission. Students met by the team were appreciative of the guidance they received from their supervisors on research methods and an external examiner has commended undergraduate dissertations 'that employ empirical research methods and use them to illuminate theological issues'.

Support for dissertation students has recently been enhanced with the provision of a software package used for statistical analysis. Training has been provided and students' reaction to, and use of, it will be monitored following submission of the dissertations. The comprehensive support given to students for writing dissertations, in particular the Dissertation Guidance Starter Pack, is **good practice**.

2.33   Students met by the team were also highly appreciative of the personal support they received both from the staff of the College and from their fellow students. All the staff of the College are actively engaged in the academic and personal development of the students and there is a pervasive family atmosphere, fostered by 'chapel time' and 'fellowship hours'.

2.34   The College's arrangements for learning resources, academic and personal support enable students to develop. As such, the review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B5): Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

Quality Code, *Chapter B5: Student Engagement*

Findings

2.35   The College ensures the engagement of students mainly through its student representation system. All students are automatically members of the Student Representative Council, of which a final year student acts as the Head Student representative. The Head of the Student Representative Council is also invited to attend meetings of Academic Board, if required, although the position is not a member of the Board. There is also an elected student representation system in operation at each of the Boards of Study.

2.36   Students arrange meetings prior to each Board of Studies to identify issues to be raised by student representatives. Tutors are seen as the first point of call for students in the case of any concerns or queries. Tutors ensure they are available to students either before or after classes. Urgent matters can be raised directly with either the Rector or Pro-Rector if required. The College also employs a Chaplain who is also a trained counsellor and is available to tutor for any personal or pastoral matters. The College also seeks student input through feedback from student surveys.

2.37   The arrangements for student engagement would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.38   The team tested the expectation by examining minutes of Boards of Study and the Academic Board. It also reviewed the Student Council Constitution, student surveys and held meetings with staff and students.

2.39   Each of the Boards of Studies include student representatives as part of their membership and both students and staff are able to discuss matters of concern at these meetings. Student surveys are used but the format of the survey focuses mainly on students providing qualitative feedback and the College is considering ways in which the survey format could be developed further to encompass both qualitative and quantitative data. This may provide more comprehensive data, particularly if student numbers grow in the future. Students were positive about the way in which the College responds to issues they raise at the Student Representative Council and gave two examples of issues that had been speedily resolved, once identified.

2.40   The College has developed both informal and formal means of engaging students in their academic studies and college life which reflects and is appropriate to the current level of student numbers. Students were extremely complimentary about the level of support provided to them, both academically and pastorally. They noted the availability of staff and especially welcomed the way in which the College structured its timetabled day to allow time for contemplation and fellowship. They commented that this contributed to the sense of community at the College. Students felt they were both valued and well supported. Therefore, the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B6): Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

Quality Code, *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning*

Findings

2.41   The College adheres to the assessment policies of Middlesex and Pearson. It has a policy of ensuring that both formative and summative assessment is used in modules to provide developmental opportunities for students. Discussion on assessment is included in the student induction programme and teaching sessions which includes ways to ensure good academic practice is observed. Staff also use teaching sessions to identify students who may benefit from additional study skills support. Further details are provided in programme handbooks.

2.42   The College has a committee structure to support assessment. Assessment Boards are attended by academic staff, the external examiner and representatives of the relevant awarding body. These Boards approve module marks. The external examiners for the Middlesex programmes produce an annual report which is considered by the Academic Board and then by the Boards of Study. The College is required by Middlesex to respond to each external examiner report and produce an action plan. The College does this with diligence and uses the reports to share good practice.

2.43   The arrangements for assessment would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.44   The team reviewed external examiner reports, meetings of assessment boards, annual programme monitoring reports, student handbooks and held meetings with staff and students.

2.45   For the Middlesex programmes, module tutors set assessment questions which are approved by university-appointed external examiners. They approve all summative assessment at Levels 5 and 6 as well as all dissertation topics before being released to students. Once the assessment has been submitted, College tutors undertake first and second marking. External examiners receive a sample of student work each semester for moderation. This sample includes scripts showing the full range of marks, all failed scripts and any borderline fails. For practical, group and individual presentations, first and second marking is used to ensure parity of marking standards. For Pearson-awarded programmes, module tutors set assessment questions which are reviewed in standardisation meetings. Student written work is first and second marked with a sample being moderated by internal verifiers.

2.46   The assessment process for Pearson awards has yet to complete its first cycle but follows the policy as governed by the awarding organisation. At the time of the review the HND student cohort had completed their assessments and were awaiting final verification of their awards by the Pearson External Verifier.

2.47   The Middlesex and Pearson provision ensure that there are clear guidelines for all aspects of the assessment processes and overall these processes appear to be implemented well. Roles and responsibilities for College staff are clear and followed by the College staff. The College has trained internal verifiers and has delivered ongoing staff development to ensure teaching staff understand and are following assessment protocol.

There are also mechanisms in place to support the checks and balances of the assessment procedures.

2.48   College staff are clear as to their roles and responsibilities in relation to assessment policy and practice. The College has ensured that appropriate training and support is made available to staff undertaking assessment tasks. External examiner reports have raised issues with levels of student achievement, in particular the quality of writing skills and the need for students to understand how they need to improve their critical thinking and performance in assessment. One report in particular reported on the inconsistency of marking across modules and the high incidence of non-submission. The College is aware of this and as part of the development and design of the programmes approved by Roehampton, critical thinking and study skills have been incorporated into compulsory Level 4 modules. Furthermore, to address the issues of inconsistency in marking standards, the College has arranged for Middlesex staff to deliver additional training and support to teaching staff to be held in late February 2016. The review team **affirms** the steps being taken to ensure consistency in marking through staff training.

2.49   There are effective systems in place for the assessment of students which enable all students to demonstrate they achieve the learning outcomes. As such, the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B7): Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

Quality Code, *Chapter B7: External Examining*

Findings

2.50   All programmes have external examiners appointed by Middlesex and Pearson. For the Pearson programmes, the organisation identifies and appoints an external examiner for the College's HND provision. For the Middlesex programmes, the College makes a recommendation to Middlesex who then determines the final appointment. The same process will apply to Roehampton.

2.51   As noted elsewhere in this report, the Middlesex-appointed external examiners approve all summative assessment at Levels 5 and 6 and also moderate a sample of assessed work. External examiners attend the Assessment Board and the Finalists' Board where an oral report is given which is followed up by a written annual report at a later date. This report uses a template set out by Middlesex as part of its quality assurance processes. The template highlights where there are examples of good practice as well as areas for improvement. The College is required to provide a response to the external examiner reports and an action plan as part of the annual monitoring processes.

2.52   The Pearson appointed External Verifier visits the College to verify awards, review policy and practice as well as identifying areas for improvement and good practice. A report is provided using the standard Pearson template. At the time of the visit, the College had yet to receive the External Verifier's report for the HND cohort.

2.53   Arrangements for the use of external examiners would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.54   The team reviewed the evidence provided in relation to external examiner policies for Middlesex and Pearson currently in operation as well as the external examiner reports and minutes of committee meetings, including assessment boards. The review team also discussed external examining with College staff and students.

2.55   The external examiner system is well established at the College for its provision awarded by Middlesex and is a key participant in the management of its assessment practice. College staff are familiar with the requirements of Pearson. The College academic governance structure ensures that external examiner reports are considered at Board of Studies and at the Academic Board. Student representatives have access to them and are able to share reports with the whole student community.

2.56   The role and purpose of external examiners is well understood by College staff and the policy for external examiners is embedded into the academic governance structure of the College. External examiner reports have identified issues and matters of concern for the College, in particular in relation to the standard of written English, critical thinking and inconsistency in marking standards. The College has responded positively to all the issues raised by the reports through action plans overseen by the Academic Board. For example, the issue of the standard of written English was addressed through the amendment of the admissions policy to require all students to have an appropriate English language qualification and also provide a written personal statement as part of their application.

2.57   The College makes scrupulous use of external examiner reports. They are fully considered at appropriate committees and used to share good practice. As such the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B8): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.

Quality Code, *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review*

Findings

2.58   The College operates annual monitoring processes that cover all its provision and are determined by the relevant awarding body and organisation. Middlesex requires the College to use its own standard reporting template for the completion of the annual monitoring report for its programmes. The completed report is considered by the Academic Board and is then submitted to the University for consideration. The report includes both the external examiner's report and the College's response to it as well as an accompanying action plan.

2.59   The Pearson HND programmes are monitored through an Academic Management Review which includes an annual visit from the External Verifier with a follow-up report which will list any essential actions required by the College. The College has not reached this stage of its assessment cycle for this provision. However, it did receive a report from the External Verifier as part of the centre-approval processes which identified essential actions for the College.

2.60   Arrangements for annual monitoring would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.61   The team examined programme annual monitoring reports, external examiner reports and minutes of the Academic Board and Boards of Study. It also met staff and students.

2.62   The annual monitoring processes for the undergraduate programmes awarded by Middlesex enables the College to review all aspects of the provision. The template for the report does ensure that key issues are identified for action. The annual monitoring report is considered by the Academic Board and the relevant Board of Studies before submission to the University for consideration. Students have an opportunity to provide an input into the report through student representation at the Boards of Studies. The College has received one External Verifier report from Pearson but at the time of the review, it has not received a report which covered confirmed student grades.

2.63   The College ensures that it carries out its responsibilities for annual monitoring as required by its two current awarding bodies satisfactorily. The College responds in a positive and timely manner to concerns and issues which are drawn to their attention in external examiner reports which do form part of the annual monitoring report. The majority of issues highlighted for action are as a direct consequence of being raised by the external examiner. While the College carries out its responsibilities for monitoring effectively, there may be ways in which the College could ensure more rigorous and detailed monitoring of its entire provision which would support planned enhancement. In order to achieve this the team **recommends** that the College should introduce an overarching annual monitoring process which covers all the higher education provision.

2.64   The College's arrangements for annual monitoring are effective, systematic and regular, with one recommendation regarding an overall College report. However, the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B9): Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.

Quality Code, *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*

Findings

2.65   The College has a complaints policy in place which includes references to both informal and formal complaints procedures. Details of the policy can be found in programme handbooks and on noticeboards. Students are informed of the policy as part of their induction. Middlesex University and Pearson require the College to adhere to their own process for academic appeals. Detail of the academic appeals process are provided in the programme handbooks. During the last academic year, the College did not received any formal complaints or requests for an academic appeal.

2.66   The arrangements for academic appeals and complaints would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.67   The College ensures that students are made aware of the complaints as well as the academic appeals policy through their induction, programme handbooks and, where applicable, through student noticeboards.

2.68   The team considered the College's and Middlesex's complaints and appeals policies, the programme student handbooks. The team met staff and students to discuss the procedures.

2.69   Students are aware of both the College's complaints policy and academic appeals polices of each of the awarding bodies. The fact that in the last year there have been no formal appeals or complaints probably reflects firstly cohort size but also the fact that the sense of community felt by the students allows for any issues to be dealt with informally and to their satisfaction. The students are comfortable to raise issues directly without the need for a formal process and this is evidenced by the manner in which their concerns regarding heating and door handles were speedily resolved once they had been brought to the attention of College staff.

2.70   The arrangements for complaints and appeals are in place with the informal processes for complaints working effectively. As such the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B10): Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*

Findings

2.71   The College's main partnerships with regards to delivering learning opportunities are with employers who provide work placements for students. Students on the Middlesex programmes are required to undertake placements in the second and third years of their programme. The ministerial studies programme requires a one-month placement in the second year and a two-month placement in the third year in a church or voluntary setting. The counselling programme requires students to undertake 100 hours of counselling in an approved counselling centre. Students are required to arrange their own placements but are guided by their tutors and by placement handbooks. A formal agreement is completed between the College, placement tutor and the church, agency or organisation providing the placement before the student starts the placement. The programme tutor acts as overall supervisor but workplace supervisors set and supervise appropriate tasks and provide feedback to the College. The respective roles and responsibilities of College tutors, local supervisors and students are set out in placement handbooks.

2.72   The design of the procedures for managing higher education provision with others would allow the Expectation to be met.

2.73   The team tested the Expectation by the examination of the documentation relating to placements and by meeting staff who manage placement activity and students who have undertaken placements.

2.74   Students who met the review team were positive about the value of work placements in enabling them to practice their skills and prepare for employment. They spoke highly of the support they received during placements from their College tutors and their work place supervisors. Although students are expected to find their own placements, the College is prepared, if necessary, to recommend suitable placements from its network of church connections. In the case of counselling placements, the College has recognised the difficulty of finding a placement in the current economic climate and has established a counselling centre in one of the churches in its congregation to provide supervision and a place for students to see their own clients. Placement providers are checked for suitability and provided with clear guidance on their responsibilities. There are differentiated placement handbooks for church and counselling placements and they carefully explain each of the stages of a placement and define in exact detail the respective responsibilities of those involved in the process. In particular, students are reminded both of the specific learning outcomes of their programmes and the broader outcomes for placements as outlined in the Quality Code. The effective management of work placement learning which enhances the learning experience of students is **good practice**.

2.75   The review team concludes that the College's arrangements for delivering learning experiences outside the College are well organised and effective. The well-produced handbooks are helpful to students, staff and employers. The Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B11): Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols.
This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.

Quality Code, *Chapter B11: Research Degrees*

Findings

2.76   The College does not offer research degrees.

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.77   In reaching its judgement about the quality of student learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook.

2.78   All 10 applicable expectations are met with low levels of risk. The College has effective systems in place for programme approval, admissions, learning and teaching, student support, student engagement, assessment, programme review, complaints and appeals and working with others. There is one recommendation concerning annual monitoring, two good practices regarding the dissertation and work-placements and one affirmation regarding marking.

2.79   The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at the College **meets** UK expectations.

3 Judgement: The quality of the information about learning opportunities

Expectation (C): UK higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the higher education they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

Quality Code, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision

Findings

3.1 Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the information about learning opportunities produced by the College is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy lies with the Rector. The review of published information, including the website, is now within the remit of the Academic Board. Policy documents are reviewed annually and some, such as the disability statement and equal opportunities policy, are published on the website. Programme handbooks, following the approval of Middlesex, are also made available on the website. Middlesex University periodically reviews the website to ensure the accuracy of information relating to its programme and, as the programme is being phased out, no new information has been produced inviting applications. Roehampton University has provided the College with a description of the potential programme for display on the website to attract enquirers. As recruitment of new students is currently suspended, no prospectus has been produced.

3.2 There are processes in place that would enable the Expectation to be met.

3.3 The review team tested the Expectation by examination of the information on the College's website and VLE and in handbooks and guidelines issued to current students. The team explored the quality of information about learning opportunities in meetings with students, teaching and support staff and senior staff.

3.4 The review team found that the information produced for current students is fit for purpose and some of it, including guidance on writing dissertation and placement handbooks, of high quality. Students the review team met reported that the information they had received on application and at induction was accurate and helpful. The student handbook contains key information on their programme and they are informed of any changes. They make extensive use of the website to access the VLE and electronic learning resources. The hiatus in student recruitment has meant that some of the information on the website, including general advice for prospective international students, is out of date. Following discussion during the review visit, non-current information was removed. As the College prepares to publish information about the new programme, it is **recommended** to ensure the currency of all information on the College's website.

3.5 The review team concludes that the College has effective procedures in place to ensure that the information for which it is responsible is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy. The Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The quality of the information about learning opportunities: Summary of findings

3.6   In reaching its judgement about the quality of information about learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook

3.7   The College follows Middlesex's procedures and uses its own processes to ensure that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

3.8   The Expectation is met and the level of risk is low. There is one recommendation regarding the currency of information. Therefore, the review team concludes that the quality of information about learning opportunities at the College **meets** UK expectations.

4 Judgement: The enhancement of student learning opportunities

Expectation (Enhancement): Deliberate steps are being taken at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities.

Findings

4.1 The College has yet to develop a formal strategy for the systematic enhancement of the student experience. It describes its enhancement strategy only in relation to its mission statement. However, it does have a number of ways by which it identifies initiatives which can lead to the improvement of the student experience. The primary means for this is through annual monitoring and responses to external examiner reports. Annual monitoring reports for Middlesex and Pearson identify areas of good practice and have led to the introduction of additional study skills elements into module design, for example. The College has a system of peer observation which enables staff to highlight good teaching practice and areas for improvement.

4.2 In addition, there are other support services available to students which reflect their needs such as, for example, the Learner Guidance and Support Policy which is used to provide further study skills support to students.

4.3 Students are encouraged to participate in the College's governance structure through the student representation system and attendance at Boards of Studies meetings or through the Student Representative Council.

4.4 The College has responded well to the needs of its student body as a consequence of the changes it has experienced, such as the decision of Middlesex to terminate its agreement with the College. The College has subsequently sought and found an appropriate university partner in Roehampton University. Roehampton already offers theology-based programmes and the College intends to use this new agreement to support the development of its staff and programmes.

4.5 The processes for enhancement are insufficient to enable the Expectation to be met.

4.6 The team considered the College's mission statement, annual monitoring reports and minutes of the Academic Board. The review team used meetings with senior staff, teaching staff and students to elicit information about this Expectation.

4.7 The College is committed to improving the student experience. It has responded well to the changing circumstances of its students through altering the timetabled day, ensuring better attendance monitoring and by the investment in the digital library. This latter initiative will enable students with caring commitments to have easier access to journals and other library resources while away from the College premises. This should enable higher submission and completion rates. This commitment to the student body also ensures that the ethos of the College generates an environment in which students feel valued and supported throughout their studies.

4.8 However, the improvements which have been introduced have been as a consequence of a reaction to an event or circumstance and there is little evidence of any deliberate steps, a systematic or strategic approach to enhancement. Staff are unclear as to the difference between continuous improvement and planned enhancement. Given that some of the uncertainties the College has experienced of late are being resolved, the combination of this commitment to student success with a clear strategy for enhancement

could deliver an exceptional experience for current and future students. To achieve this the review team **recommends** that the College ensures it develops a deliberate, explicit and systematic approach to Enhancement.

4.9   While the College did not provide an Enhancement section in its self-evaluation for this review and many initiatives were reactive, the team considered that some of the developments in the College (such as the Digital Library) could constitute Enhancement. However, the Expectation is not met according to the QAA definition of Enhancement and the associated level of risk is moderate.

Expectation: Not met
Level of risk: Moderate

The enhancement of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

4.10   In reaching its judgement about the enhancement of student learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook.

4.11   The Expectation is not met and the level of risk is moderate. The College is not able to provide a clear enhancement strategy which is strategic and deliberate. It does make use of information from students, annual monitoring and external examiners to improve the provision. The College did give examples the team could regard as constituting Enhancement. There is one recommendation for the College to provide a deliberate, explicit and systematic approach to enhancement.

4.12   Therefore, the review team concludes that the enhancement of student learning opportunities **requires improvement to meet** UK expectations.

5 Commentary on the Theme: Student Employability

Findings

5.1 The mission of the College is to 'prepare students to become leaders in their chosen field of endeavour in business, employment or Christian ministry'. It considers that an outcome of the programmes it offers is that successful students should be more attractive to employers as a result of the qualifications they have achieved. It recognises, however, the need to take external factors into account and, as a result, the programme validated by Roehampton University does not contain a counselling pathway.

5.2 Transferable skills, including teamwork, presentation skills, communication skills, research skills, IT skills and problem solving are embedded in the programmes offered by the College. Compulsory personal development planning activity enables students to identify achievements and reflect on current and future aims and opportunities. Placements in the second and third years of the Middlesex programme provide students with experience of the working environment and the College occasionally offers students volunteering opportunities within the College. Chapel time provides an opportunity for students to enhance specialist communication skills.

5.3 The College receives feedback from employers who provide placement opportunities and uses it to enhance the management of placements. The College contacts local churches about training needs they have identified among their congregations and the design of the new Roehampton programme has been informed by the views of ministers and employers.

5.4 There is no careers service but many of the students are trained ministers and the College can provide information about employment opportunities through its links with churches. On completion of their programme of study, students are entitled to an exit interview with the Rector to discuss what they will do after graduating. Following a suggestion from students, the College is planning a careers day at which alumni will be invited to talk about what they have done since graduating.

5.5 Following a survey and structured interviews on employability, the student submission concluded that the College contributed positively to student employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial ability. As a result of preparing for the review, however, the College has realised that students may not be sufficiently aware of the value of activities aimed at increasing their employability. Tutors intend, therefore, to be more explicit about the transferability of skills to employment and the opportunities afforded by placements.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Definitions of key operational terms are also given on pages 22-25 of the Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) handbook

If you require formal definitions of other terms please refer to the section on assuring standards and quality: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality

User-friendly explanations of a wide range of terms can be found in the longer **Glossary** on the QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/Pages/GlossaryEN.aspx

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

Award
A qualification, or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the intended **learning outcomes** and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for a **programme** or unit of study.

Blended learning
Learning delivered by a number of different methods, usually including face-to-face and e-learning (see **technology enhanced or enabled learning**).

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.

Degree-awarding body
A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA (in response to applications for taught degree awarding powers, research degree awarding powers or university title).

Distance learning
A course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors but instead uses technology such as the internet, intranets, broadcast media, CD-ROM and video, or traditional methods of correspondence - learning 'at a distance'.
See also **blended learning**.

Dual award or double award
The granting of separate awards (and certificates) for the same **programme** by two **degree-awarding bodies** who have jointly delivered the programme of study leading to them. See also **multiple award**.

e-learning
See technology enhanced or enabled learning

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 our review processes.

Expectations
Statements in the **Quality Code** that set out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

Flexible and distributed learning
A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations.
See also **distance learning**.

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

Framework for higher education qualifications
A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FQHEIS).

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

Multiple awards
An arrangement where three or more **degree-awarding bodies** together provide a single jointly delivered **programme** (or programmes) leading to a separate **award** (and separate certification) of each awarding body. The arrangement is the same as for **dual/double awards**, but with three or more awarding bodies being involved.

Operational definition
A formal definition of a term, establishing exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

Programme (of study)
An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

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

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

Quality Code
Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of **reference points** for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the **Expectations** that all providers are required to meet.

Reference points
Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

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

Technology enhanced or enabled learning (or **e-learning**)
Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

Threshold academic standard
The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic **award**. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks** and **Subject Benchmark Statements**.

Virtual learning environment (VLE)
An intranet or password-only interactive website (also referred to as a platform or user interface) giving access to **learning opportunities** electronically. These might include such resources as course handbooks, information and reading lists; blogs, message boards and forums; recorded lectures; and/or facilities for online seminars (webinars).

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

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