



Docklands Academy, London

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

November 2012

Key findings about Docklands Academy, London

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in November 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **limited confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality and Edexcel.

The team also considers that there can be **limited confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding organisations.

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

Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the Academy's rapid and full response to students' requests for library books (paragraph 2.11)
- the generous investment in, and high priority placed by the Academy on, the provision of high quality accommodation, learning and teaching resources (paragraph 2.13).

Recommendations

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

The team considers that it is **essential** for the provider to:

- ensure that the grading schemes adhere to awarding organisation guidance, all assessment tasks meet intended learning outcomes, and that assessment feedback, especially relating to plagiarism, is given promptly (paragraphs 1.9 and 2.3).

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

- ensure that all stated policies are translated into academic practice and are implemented appropriately and consistently (paragraphs 1.3-1.5 and 2.3)
- train and extend the number of staff who undertake internal verification and implement a formal programme of standardisation (paragraph 1.11)
- review the quality, content and effectiveness of the teaching and learning strategy, particularly the writing and use of schemes of work and lesson plans (paragraph 2.5)
- review the staff recruitment policy and require, or expect progress towards, formal teaching qualifications for new appointments (paragraph 2.9)
- prioritise professional development opportunities for teaching staff on teaching and learning strategies and approaches (paragraph 2.12).

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

- review the distribution of academic responsibilities to ensure a more manageable workload and appropriate distribution of responsibilities for the verification of assessment (paragraphs 1.1 and 2.2)
- ensure a detailed focus on student performance in the Quality Committee and Academic and Advisory Board (paragraph 1.2)
- increase awareness of the Academic Infrastructure with teachers (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.4)
- review its teaching observation process as a means of identifying and sharing good practice, and identifying the outcomes for staff development (paragraph 2.6)
- review the content of programme handbooks and review their content in relation to the Quality Manual (paragraph 2.8)
- review the relationship between its website and the virtual learning environment to ensure the contents reflect their purposes and minimise the potential for inaccuracy caused by multiple sources of information (paragraph 3.2)
- introduce a system to formally record the outcomes of approval checks on public information for which the Academy is responsible (paragraph 3.4)
- establish a comprehensive process for monitoring information published by its agents (paragraph 3.5).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Docklands Academy, London (the provider; the Academy). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality and Edexcel. The review was carried out by Jane Durant, Vinay Kanani (reviewers) and Martin Hill (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).² Evidence in support of the review included:

- the agreements and handbooks from the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality, the Institute of Administrative Management and Edexcel
- meetings with students
- meetings with staff
- samples of marked student work
- the policy documents and manuals published by the Academy.

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

- the Academic Infrastructure
- Qualifications and Credit Framework.

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

Docklands Academy, London (the Academy) was originally established in August 2009, located in Aston Science Park, Birmingham. In July 2011, the Academy began operating in new premises in the City Harbour district of Docklands in London. It occupies four floors totalling nearly 10,000 square metres. In August 2011, the Academy offered its first higher education programme, the Diploma in Business and Administrative Management at level 5 awarded by the Institute of Administrative Management. Nine students were enrolled and completed in August 2012.

The Academy is accredited to run professional programmes for the Association of Business Executives, the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality, the Institute of Administrative Management and Edexcel. In July 2012, two students were enrolled to Edexcel programmes. One further student has recently been enrolled to study the Diploma in Catering and Restaurant Management awarded by the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality.

Beyond the scope of this review, the Academy also offers programmes in general English language, which are studied on a short-course basis. Twenty-two students have enrolled on these programmes.

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4.

² www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

At the time of the review, the Academy offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations. The student numbers enrolled on each course are given in brackets:

Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality

- Diploma in Catering and Restaurant Management (level 5) (1)

Edexcel

- Certificate in Strategic Management and Leadership (level 7) (1)
- Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership (level 7) (1)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The mission statement of the Academy is to 'build leaders of the future'. The Academy aims to provide progression opportunities for its existing students, but also to respond to a growing local demand for vocational education at a higher level.

The Academy is responsible for the recruitment of students, their induction and guidance. With the exception of the Edexcel awards, the awarding organisations have responsibility for curriculum design, development and assessment. For the Edexcel awards, Academy staff summatively assess and undertake internal verification before student work is submitted for external examination. Students are prepared for the examinations of the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality. The Academy has responsibility for programme delivery. One of the Academy's aims is to have a framework for quality management in higher education, which can be readily aligned to the requirements of its awarding partners.

Recent developments

The Academy has recently signed a memorandum of cooperation with Leeds Metropolitan University to enable top-up opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The Academy has also received notification that it has reached the Investors in People standard.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the Academy were invited to present a submission to the review team. A student representative from the Student Committee attended a QAA briefing on the Review for Educational Oversight. Following this, a group of four students sought their colleagues' views of their experience at the Academy. Using this information, they wrote a submission on the learner experience. This document was helpful to the team in preparing for the review. The team also met students during the preparatory meeting and at the review visit. This included past students who had completed the Institute of Administrative Management programme and current students. These meetings allowed the team to gather more detailed information about the student perspective.

Detailed findings about Docklands Academy, London

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 Responsibilities for the management of higher education programmes are clearly defined by the respective awarding partners and understood by Academy staff. In line with the current small size of the provision, staff undertake multiple roles and responsibilities. Although having a focus on the business and strategic development of the Academy, the Principal has responsibility for monitoring academic standards through membership of the Board of Directors and the Academic and Advisory Board. The Head of Academics is responsible for completing all aspects of the academic quality assurance framework, including internal quality review, internal verification, programme approval, teaching and learning observations, and approval of teaching and learning materials. Programme coordinators are responsible for general programme administration. Lecturers are responsible for planning and delivering learning, assessing, and providing tutorial support for students. In consequence, the current arrangements primarily rely on the Head of Academics for the management of academic standards, especially relating to student assessment. It is desirable for the Academy to review the distribution of academic responsibilities to ensure a more manageable workload and appropriate distribution of responsibilities for the verification of assessment.

1.2 Following a recent restructure, the Academy is implementing a clearly defined, and formally reported, three-tier management structure, established to suit its long-term aims. The tiers progress from heads of department meetings to the Academic and Advisory Board and the Quality Committee. These groups run in parallel, and ultimately report to the Board of Directors. Although this works effectively for issues relating to resources, student feedback, public information, and plans for the further development of higher education, from the evidence provided it is unclear where issues relating to student academic performance are formally reviewed and considered throughout the tiered structure. It is desirable for the Academy to ensure a detailed focus on student performance in the Quality Committee and Academic and Advisory Board.

1.3 The Academy produces a wealth of policies, procedures, and guidance through the Quality Manual, including a separate detailed higher education policy which duplicates sections of the manual. The review team agree with the views of Academy staff that the Academic Regulations and Quality Manual are so comprehensive as to be time consuming to navigate. The team also considers the duplication of information in different documents has the potential to cause confusion. Further comments on the Quality Manual and recommendations are in paragraphs 1.4, 1.5 and 2.5.

1.4 Actual practice for the management of academic standards varies significantly from formal policy and procedure in a number of instances. For example, in the Quality Manual the policy on plagiarism guarantees that at an early stage in their programmes, students will be acquainted with plagiarism detection software. However, the Academy does not use any software. The Quality Manual outlines the documents to be used in an internal process to assure the quality of new programmes prior to delivery. However, actual practice does not reflect this, and there is no formal sign-off process to evidence approval.

1.5 The content of the annual self-assessment is generic, focusing on process and task completion rather than the management of quality and academic standards. Arrangements for the annual Internal Quality Review Report are outlined in the Quality Manual. They draw

on a number of relevant evidence sources, including student data. At the institutional level, there is a brief summary of activities, development, good practice and areas for development for each of the Academy's departments, including academic. There is not yet any evidence that the annual programme review cycle has been implemented, nor that the review process deals appropriately with the management of academic standards. It is advisable for the Academy to ensure that all stated policies are translated into academic practice and are implemented appropriately and consistently.

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

1.6 The awarding partners are responsible for providing the unit specifications aligned to *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ). Reference to external reference points is provided for students through programme specifications, programme handbooks and assessment briefs.

1.7 There is little evidence that all staff are fully conversant with the Academic Infrastructure. Academy policies and procedures refer to the precepts of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*). However, current knowledge significantly rests with the Head of Academics. It is desirable for the Academy to increase awareness of the Academic Infrastructure with teachers.

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

1.8 The approaches to the design and marking of assessment for the Edexcel programmes present a significant threat to academic standards. The assessment regulations in the Quality Manual outline a grading scheme, which is contrary to Edexcel assessment requirements and misinforms students and staff. A number of assessment brief tasks were not suited to generating the intended learning outcomes.

1.9 The practice of providing draft submission formative feedback provides students with a suitable balance of comments on subject content, writing style and scholarliness. However, although some formative feedback highlights where text is not referenced, there is no routine procedure to check for plagiarism at this stage. Students are given extremely long time frames to submit final versions of assessments. This means that it can be months before students receive summative feedback, or realise that formal action may be taken due to incidences of plagiarism. It is essential for the Academy to ensure that the grading schemes adhere to awarding organisation guidance, all assessment tasks meet intended learning outcomes, and that assessment feedback, especially relating to plagiarism, is given promptly.

1.10 As the Edexcel programmes have only been offered since July 2012, an external examiner has not yet been appointed. In accordance with Edexcel procedures, the Academy uses documentation produced by the awarding organisation to record the verification of assessment briefs prior to issue, and plans to do the same for the verification of final assessment decisions.

1.11 All internal verification is undertaken by one member of staff. However, as noted in paragraph 1.8, internal verification has failed to identify that not all assessments tasks are written to address all intended learning outcomes. Teaching staff demonstrated limited understanding of standardisation of assessment practice and this is not a formally recorded activity. It is advisable for the Academy to train and extend the number of staff who undertake internal verification and implement a formal programme of standardisation.

The review team has **limited confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers on behalf of its awarding organisation.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The committee arrangements and staff responsibilities for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities are as outlined in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2.

2.2 The Head of Academics takes responsibility for most of the procedures for the management of the quality of learning opportunities. The small number of enrolled students means that programme coordinators can informally deal with some student matters relating to learning opportunities. (See desirable recommendation in paragraph 1.1).

2.3 As noted in paragraphs 1.4 and 1.9, in relation to the identification of plagiarism, actual practice in the management of the quality of learning opportunities varies significantly from stated policies and procedures. The advisable recommendation in paragraph 1.5 and the essential recommendation in paragraph 1.9 also apply to the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities.

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

2.4 As identified in paragraph 1.7, there is limited evidence of an understanding of the Academic Infrastructure. The Academy uses the benchmarks from specifications provided by its awarding partners. The Academy is aided in identifying relevant reference points for its teaching in catering and restaurant management by its industry partners. The Academy proposes to undertake staff training on the UK Quality Code for Higher Education later in the year. (See desirable recommendation in paragraph 1.7).

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

2.5 There is little evidence that the Academy systematically reviews the effectiveness of its teaching and learning strategy. The Quality Manual details a variety of mechanisms to assure the quality of teaching and learning. In particular, the teaching and learning strategy places reliance on teaching observations, staff meetings, staff appraisals, programme reviews, consideration of student feedback, and the professional staff development programme. The evidence presented to the team suggests these mechanisms are not being effectively used. For example, the programme review procedures to monitor teaching and learning have not been undertaken. Minutes of staff meetings and the one staff appraisal record reviewed contained minimal information relating to the quality of learning opportunities. Staff demonstrated misunderstanding between the purpose of schemes of work and lesson plans, which, although they have been approved for use, are insufficiently detailed or well considered. It is advisable for the Academy to review the quality, content and effectiveness of its teaching and learning strategy, particularly the writing and use of schemes of work and lesson plans.

2.6 The teaching observation process provides little opportunity for the sharing of good practice among other teaching staff or incorporation into staff development. Based on a criterion-referenced model, the teaching observation framework aligns to the further

education inspection framework. However, practice differs from the stated policy. For example, the strategy states that a peer observation scheme will operate. In practice, a manager undertakes observations that are linked to performance management. Although higher education programmes have been offered before this academic year, only one observation record was available. The quality of observation feedback is limited in quality and restricted by the published criteria. It is desirable for the Academy to review its teaching observation process as a means of identifying and sharing good practice, and identifying the outcomes for staff development.

2.7 Students commented positively that their tutors provide them with a learning experience which has relevance to industry. They identified examples of customised teaching sessions to take into account individual student needs.

2.8 Programme handbooks contain much information duplicated from the Quality Manual. The Academy uses a standard template for programme handbooks to assure consistency. Containing copious amounts of central policies and procedures, they also include necessary information from relevant awarding partners, such as programme specifications. Students have access to these handbooks via the Academy website, the virtual learning environment, and in hard copy. Additionally, the Academy Handbook supports students with further central information. As stated in paragraphs 1.3 to 1.5, there is potential for confusion about procedures and policies for programmes. It is desirable for the Academy to review the content of programme handbooks and their use in relation to the Quality Manual.

2.9 The Academy employs part-time tutors for most of its teaching, and recruitment is based largely on referrals and contacts. Teaching staff are expected to have appropriate industry experience. A formal staff induction system is in place and staff said that it was effective. However, there are only two staff in the Academy who have degree level teaching qualifications and they do not teach on the higher education programmes. It is advisable for the Academy to review its staff recruitment policy and require, or expect progress towards, formal teaching qualifications for new appointments.

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

2.10 The initial support and induction for new entrants and the monitoring of their progress is effective. The Academy provides formal and informal opportunities for academic and pastoral support to address the particular challenges faced by international students, including referral for English language support. Students value the open-door policy of staff. Further support and academic guidance is also identified in student handbooks and the virtual learning environment. There is a tutorial policy. Tutorials are timetabled and student attendance at these is monitored.

2.11 A range of formal mechanisms are in place for students to feed back their views. Students complete programme surveys, student representatives meet with senior management each semester and attend programme meetings. A Student Committee operates as a forum for students to discuss a variety of academic issues related to their learning and to feed back issues to management. Students particularly commended the Academy's rapid and full response to requests for library books and this is good practice.

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

2.12 The Academy has procedures for staff development, and staff meetings are used to identify operational and development needs. The staff appraisal system has been used for only one member of staff. The professional development records indicate that staff

development operates for personal and operational topics, rather than teaching and learning matters. As noted in paragraph 1.8, there have been serious errors on important teaching and learning issues. It is advisable for the Academy to prioritise professional development opportunities for teaching staff on teaching and learning strategies and approaches.

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

2.13 Students commented on the high quality of the accommodation and teaching resources. The Academy has an information technology suite that adequately provides for the current student numbers. An electronic student management system operates for registers. The Academy has an academic progress management system which supports students with letters and references to access external resources. The generous investment in, and high priority placed by the Academy on, the provision of high quality accommodation, learning and teaching resources is good practice.

2.14 The Academy's virtual learning environment contains the majority of the information that students need for their courses. This includes programme specifications and handbooks, as well as lesson plans, resources for sessions and teacher support. Staff and students acknowledged the usefulness of the virtual learning environment.

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

3 Public information

How effectively does the provider's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?

3.1 The Academy publishes an extensive range of public information, including programme information packs, the student handbook, programme handbooks, a large number of policy documents, and a welcome pack for students on a compact disc. The Academy is committed to providing information through information technology. The website is used as a primary source of information. It provides information on the Academy, its mission and vision; facilities; links to useful UK government agencies; a helpful frequently asked questions section; information about living in London; access to all internal policies and procedures, the Quality Manual, and programme handbooks. The Academy also provides students with access to social media sites and videos from a video share website. Students value these social media sites and would like these to be further developed and utilised. Students acknowledge that, although they do not use the website, as they joined the Academy mainly through personal contacts, it could be useful for parents and prospective students.

3.2 The virtual learning environment provides students with programme handbooks, as well as lecture and assessment materials. The Academy considers the website to be an important marketing tool. However, the considerable amount of programme and procedural information it includes detracts from its key purpose, while duplicating considerable amounts of information more suitable for access once students are enrolled. It is desirable for the Academy to review the relationship between its website and the virtual learning environment to ensure the contents reflect their purposes and minimise the potential for inaccuracy caused by multiple sources of information.

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

3.3 The three-stage approval process for assuring and enhancing the accuracy of public information clearly assigns responsibility for information from teaching staff through to the Principal and the Academic and Advisory Board and Quality Committee. Public information and marketing are considered very important for developing the Academy. To this end an external website developer and a proofreader are employed. The proofreader is successfully addressing previous errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation on the website. The Academy plans to apply the use of an external proofreader to all internal and external-facing student information.

3.4 Evidence of approval and formal application of the three-stage approval procedure is not currently recorded. Consistency in core programme information is assured through the use of standard templates for programme handbooks and assignment briefs. These are checked by the Head of Academics. At present, the Head of Academics checks this information, including all teaching materials prior to uploading to the virtual learning environment. It is desirable that a system is introduced to formally record the outcomes of approval checks on public information for which the Academy is responsible.

3.5 Formal agreements with over 50 external recruitment agents include specific conditions relating to the management of information that is distributed by the Academy. The Academy supplies agents with standard information packs, but does not have a systematic process for monitoring compliance to this, nor reviewing the information available from agents. It is desirable that the Academy establishes a comprehensive process for monitoring information published by its agents.

The team concludes that **reliance can be placed** on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the provider is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Action plan³

Docklands Academy, London action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight November 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Academy's rapid and full response to students' requests for library books (paragraph 2.11) 	<p>Review the library resources to ensure they are in line with programme resource requirements</p> <p>Consider further requests from students to order more books and resources</p> <p>Include agenda items at the Academic and Advisory Board meeting, as appropriate</p>	15 January 2013 and the beginning of every term	Management Team	Library stock is updated in accordance with programme needs, as well as staff and student requests	Board of Directors	<p>Academic and Advisory Board meeting minutes</p> <p>Staff and student feedback</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the generous investment in, and high priority placed by the Academy on, 	Review the new investment plan and further investment strategies in the	15 January 2013 and the beginning	Board of Directors	Planned and implemented investment and purchases to	Board of Directors/Principal	<p>Board of Directors meeting minutes</p> <p>Student and staff</p>

³ The provider has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the provider's awarding organisation.

the provision of high quality accommodation, learning and teaching resources (paragraph 2.13).	Board of Directors meeting	of every term		meet high standard of staff and student needs		feedback
Essential	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is essential for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the grading schemes adhere to awarding organisation guidance, all assessment tasks meet intended learning outcomes, and that assessment feedback, especially relating to plagiarism, is given promptly (paragraphs 1.9 and 2.3). 	<p>Academic and Advisory Board to revise to ensure that awarding organisation assessment procedures such as recording procedures planning of evidence gathering, feedback on work submitted and final outcomes are recorded on assessment forms, which are then signed by students and lecturers</p> <p>To make sure regulations related to grading scheme are in place and implemented</p>	31 March 2013	Quality Manager and internal verifiers	<p>Quality Manager and internal verifiers will ensure that the process of recording assessment procedures and grading of assignments are put in place</p> <p>All written records are signed</p>	Academic and Advisory Board	<p>Internal verifier to ensure that teaching staff fill in all assessment records and are signed</p> <p>Assessment records/forms including signed feedbacks forms</p> <p>Minutes of meeting of the Academic and Advisory Board</p>

	The internal verifiers and teaching staff to review and make sure that all assessment tasks meet the intended learning outcomes and give formal feedback using formal feedback forms that are signed by the student and the lecturer to deal with plagiarism, promptly	31 March 2013	Head of Academics, teaching staff and Quality Manager	Internal verifiers and teaching staff to make sure that assessment tasks meet the learning outcomes are according to awarding organisation assessment regulations Formal feedback records put in place to tackle plagiarism promptly and effectively	Academic and Advisory Board	Internal verifiers documents and assignment briefs Assessment records/feedback forms Plagiarism training records
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is advisable for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that all stated policies are translated into academic practice and are implemented appropriately and consistently (paragraphs 1.3-1.5 and 2.3) 	Head of Academics and Quality Manager will make sure that all stated policies, such as Teaching and Learning Policy, Assessment Policy and evaluation from student/staff feedback, are changed into academic practice	31 March 2013	Head of Academics, Academic staff and Quality Manager	Student and staff feedback regarding the effectiveness of stated policies	Academic and Advisory Board	Academic team training records Students and staff feedback regarding effectiveness of polices and processes Updated Policies; Teaching and

	and applied appropriately and consistently					Learning, Assessment Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> train and extend the number of staff who undertake internal verification and implement a formal programme of standardisation (paragraph 1.11) 	<p>Implement the system of programme standardisation and monitor at Academic and Advisory Board meetings</p> <p>Train staff who undertake internal verification</p>	<p>31 March 2013</p> <p>31 March 2013</p>	Quality Manager, Head of Academics and Academic staff	<p>Standardisations across the programmes and effective monitoring system in place through standardisation meetings</p> <p>A development requirement to train extra staff who carry out internal verification</p>	Academic and Advisory Board and Principal	<p>Academic and Advisory Board meeting minutes and continuing professional development records</p> <p>Standardisation minutes of meetings</p> <p>Staff internal verification training record and qualification</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the quality, content and effectiveness of the teaching and learning strategy, particularly the writing and use of schemes of work and lesson plans (paragraph 2.5) 	<p>Implement teaching and learning strategies in terms of writing and use of schemes of work and lesson plans</p> <p>Schemes of work to include objectives, progression and assessment methods</p> <p>Lesson plans to include different learning styles of students, explore</p>	31 March 2013	Teaching Staff	<p>All teaching staff attended the preparation for Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualifications</p> <p>Recruit new staff that are positive about teaching</p> <p>Implement and strengthen selection process</p>	Head of Academics	<p>Preparation for Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector training and registration followed by certification</p> <p>Recruitment Policy and selection form</p>

	<p>options and evaluate outcomes of teaching methods, reflection and review of lesson plans</p> <p>Review and update assessment for learning strategy to review schemes of work and lesson plans</p>			<p>to take into account teaching qualification and experience</p> <p>Provide ongoing training and workshops and evaluate teaching and learning through observations and student feedback</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the staff recruitment policy and require, or expect progress towards, formal teaching qualifications for new appointments (paragraph 2.9) 	<p>Review Recruitment Policy for new recruits</p> <p>Implement and strengthen selection process to take into account teaching qualification or working towards, for all new appointments</p> <p>Provide ongoing training and workshops and evaluate teaching and learning through observations and student feedback</p> <p>Provide continuing professional</p>	31 March 2013	Vice Principal and Quality Manager	<p>Effective processes such as selection process for new appointments will be in place and ensure their suitability</p> <p>Internal verifiers to observe new staff and evaluate student feedback in order to identify any training needs</p>	Principal	<p>Staff continuing professional development records and students feedback regarding the new member of academic staff</p> <p>Curriculum Vitae, job descriptions and qualifications documents</p>

	development such as the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prioritise professional development opportunities for teaching staff on teaching and learning strategies and approaches (paragraph 2.12). 	Develop professional development plans/training for teaching staff on teaching and learning strategies and approaches	31 March 2013	Quality Manager and Principal	Development training processes put in place for all teaching staff	Academic and Advisory Board	Preparation for Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification Training records related to teaching and learning
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is desirable for the Academy to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the distribution of academic responsibilities to ensure a more manageable workload and appropriate distribution of responsibilities for the verification of assessment (paragraphs 1.1 and 2.2) 	Implement precise job descriptions for all staff and allocate work accordingly during weekly staff meetings	15 January 2013 and then the beginning of every term	Principal and Head of Academics	Principal and Head of Academics to monitor and ensure that staff carry out the work they are assigned Implement an effective workload system to ensure the distribution of work is manageable	Board of Directors	Weekly staff meeting minutes Board of Directors meeting minutes Staff job descriptions Organisation chart

				through planning and meeting deadlines		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure a detailed focus on student performance in the Quality Committee and Academic and Advisory Board (paragraph 1.2) 	Develop a monitoring process, a student record system to measure improvement to assess student performance by the Quality Committee and Academic and Advisory Board	15 January 2013 and then the beginning of every term	Quality Committee and Academic and Advisory Board	Successful implementation of student recording system to measure performance in the Quality Committee and Academic and Advisory Board meetings	Board of Directors	<p>Quality Committee and Academic and Advisory Board meeting minutes</p> <p>Board of Directors Meeting minutes</p> <p>Student performance data analysis such as overall programme success rate and overall Academy student performance success rate</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase awareness of the Academic Infrastructure with teachers (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.4) 	Review and assess through training events and staff meetings, the awareness of the Academic Infrastructure regularly with teaching staff, non-teaching staff and programme coordinators	31 March 2013	Quality Manager and Head of Academics	All training to be recorded into staff continuing professional development and effective training system in place	Principal	<p>Staff training records</p> <p>Continuing professional development records</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review its teaching observation process as a means of identifying and sharing good practice, and identifying the outcomes for staff development (paragraph 2.6) 	<p>Review of Recruitment Policy, Teaching and Learning policy and Staff Development policy; we aim to improve the teaching observation process</p> <p>Internal verifiers to observe teaching staff and make recommendations of any training needs identified</p>	31 March 2013	Quality Manager and Academic staff	Observations carried out by the internal verifiers will show changes made to the Teaching and Learning Policy, Recruitment Policy and Staff Development Policy	Academic and Advisory Board	Teaching and Learning Policy, Recruitment Policy, Staff Development Policy and teaching observation forms
	<p>Implement and embed teaching observation process to identify and share good practice and to identify staff development needs</p> <p>Share the good practice at Academic meetings by talking about experiences and evaluation of observations</p>	31 March 2013	Quality Manager/ Internal verifiers	All teaching staff undergo a teaching observation at least twice and four for new appointed teachers per academic year	Academic and Advisory Board	<p>Teaching observation records</p> <p>Academic and Advisory Board meeting minutes</p> <p>Academic training records</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the content of programme handbooks and review their content in relation to the 	Quality Manager, internal verifiers and programme coordinators to make sure that the	31 March 2013	Quality Manager and programme coordinators	Quality Manager to review contents related to programme handbooks and	Principal	<p>Programme handbooks</p> <p>Quality Manual</p>

Quality Manual (paragraph 2.8)	programme handbooks and their contents are not repeated in the Quality Manual			make sure that they are not repeated in the Quality Manual		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the relationship between its website and the virtual learning environment to ensure the contents reflect their purposes and minimise the potential for inaccuracy caused by multiple sources of information (paragraph 3.2) 	Review of the contents of the website reflects the overall information about admission, programmes details, guidance on visa and student supports services as well as course fee and minimise the potential for inaccuracy caused by multiple sources of information	31 March 2013	Head of Marketing, Head of Information Technology and programme coordinators	A signed approval from the Academic Board and the Board of Directors that a successful implementation of new content of web page and virtual learning environment are fit for its purpose	Principal	Website and virtual learning environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce a system to formally record the outcomes of approval checks on public information for which the Academy is responsible (paragraph 3.4) 	Implement the system of public information approval from the Academic and Advisory Board and the Board of Directors that has a meeting agenda for public information checked and approval form signed	31 March 2013	Principal/Head of Technology Manager	A successful implementation of a public information approval and records by the Academic and Advisory Board and the Board of Directors	Academic and Advisory Board	Records of approval of public information and signing of documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish a comprehensive process for monitoring information 	Agent Monitoring Policy is put in place to monitor agents and the information published by them	15 January 2013 and then the last week of every	Head of Marketing	Head of Marketing to successfully implement the policy through	Principal	Agent Monitoring Policy Monitoring records on agents

published by its agents (paragraph 3.5).		month		monitoring records and will ensure information published by agents is screened and keep the agent if they are active		that will show the activity of the agents, their performance level and publishing materials used by them to recruit students
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About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk.

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/tier-4.

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)⁴

Academic Infrastructure Guidance developed and agreed by the higher education community and published by QAA, which is used by institutions to ensure that their courses meet national expectations for academic standards and that students have access to a suitable environment for learning (academic quality). It consists of four groups of reference points: the **frameworks for higher education qualifications**, the **subject benchmark statements**, the **programme specifications** and the **Code of practice**. Work is underway (2011-12) to revise the Academic Infrastructure as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

academic quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, institutions manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

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

awarding body A body with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the **framework for higher education qualifications**, such as diplomas or degrees.

awarding organisation An organisation with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework for England and Northern Ireland (these qualifications are at levels 1 to 8, with levels 4 and above being classed as 'higher education').

Code of practice *The Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, published by QAA: a set of interrelated documents giving guidance for higher education institutions.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed to perform a particular function.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

enhancement Taking deliberate steps at institutional level to improve the quality of **learning opportunities**. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

feature of good practice A positive aspect of the way a higher education institution manages quality and standards, which may be seen as exemplary to others.

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

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education Academics in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks:

⁴ www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland.

highly trusted sponsor An education Academy that the UK government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

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

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

operational definition A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reports.

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

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

Academy An institution that offers courses of higher education, typically on behalf of a separate **awarding body or organisation**. In the context of REO, the term means an independent college.

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

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by Academics for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

quality See **academic quality**.

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

threshold academic standard The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications frameworks. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

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

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