



**Grafton College Ltd t/a
Grafton College of Management Sciences**

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

November 2014

Key findings about Grafton College Ltd t/a Grafton College of Management Sciences

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in November 2014, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the College manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of the Australian Institute of Business, the Chartered Management Institute and Pearson.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the College 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 information that the College produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Good practice

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

- thorough and self-critical annual programme reviews, which are externally led (paragraph 1.4)
- a formally timetabled study skills programme that differentiates between student needs and is underpinned by a comprehensive handbook (paragraphs 2.8, 3.2).

Recommendations

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

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

- implement more rigorous and systematic reporting arrangements within and between its various committees (paragraphs 1.1, 1.2, 2.13)
- ensure that the Academic Board fulfils its responsibilities for all substantive matters relating to academic standards (paragraphs 1.3, 1.5, 2.2, 2.13)
- ensure that the publications policy explicitly addresses the production and approval of printed marketing materials (paragraph 3.4).

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

- extend the scope of the lesson observation reporting form (paragraph 2.5)
- continue to widen the range of approaches to learning and teaching (paragraph 2.6).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the Review for Educational Oversight (REO)¹ conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Grafton College Ltd t/a Grafton College of Management Sciences (the College), which is a privately funded provider of higher education. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the College 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 College delivers on behalf of the Australian Institute of Business, the Chartered Management Institute and Pearson. The review was carried out by Professor Danny Morton, Dr Richard Samuels, Mrs Maz Stewart (reviewers) and Mr David Lewis (Coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the College and in accordance with the Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook.² Evidence in support of the review included: a range of internal documentation; policy, procedure and strategy statements; records of meetings; and a wide sample of information produced for students and staff, including publicity, handbooks, and curriculum and teaching materials. The team looked at a sample of assessed student work and held meetings with staff and students. It also considered the materials submitted by the College for annual monitoring, as well as external reports, including those of external verifiers, the Academic Management Review Report produced by Pearson in 2014, and the REO report published by QAA in 2013.

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

- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)
- the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
- regulatory and guidance documents published by the awarding organisations.

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

The College is a well-established independent provider of higher education located in Shepherds Bush Green, London. Formed in 2004, the College has developed its provision with a focus on vocational higher education programmes in business, computing and accounting. The mission statement of the College emphasises the development of a first class learning environment based upon respect for students and staff. The mission statement also includes a commitment to the provision of access to learning opportunities for students from all backgrounds and prior learning.

The College management structure involves the directors and owners overseeing a senior management team with devolved areas of responsibility. The team includes a Head of Academics, who is responsible for all of the academic provision. There are 861 higher education students, all full-time, and 35 academic members of staff, including part-time and hourly appointments. A further 19 management and administrative staff support the provision. Around 90 per cent of students are from the UK and European Community. The 10 per cent of overseas students represent a wide range of nationalities, with the largest proportion from Pakistan. The average age of students is 34, while 62 per cent of students are men.

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/Educational-Oversight-.aspx

² www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=2669

At the time of the review, the College offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations with student numbers in brackets:

Australian Institute of Business

- Master of Business Administration (13)

Chartered Management Institute

- Level 6 Diploma in Management Leadership (29)

Pearson

- BTEC level 4 HNC Business (1)
- BTEC level 5 HND Business (654)
- BTEC level 5 HND Business (Accounting) (1)
- BTEC level 5 HND Business (Human Resources) (0)
- BTEC level 5 HND Business (Law) (0)
- BTEC level 5 HND Business (Management) (144)
- BTEC level 5 HND Business (Marketing) (0)
- BTEC level 5 HND Computing and Systems Development (9)
- BTEC level 5 HND Travel and Tourism Management (0)
- BTEC level 7 Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership (10)

The College's stated responsibilities

The College states that its delegated responsibilities are similar for each of its awarding partners for most aspects of the quality of learning opportunities and information about learning opportunities. There are some differences in relation to standards, particularly assessment. The College has sole or shared responsibility for student recruitment, academic and welfare support, learning and teaching, staff development, resources, the collection and use of student opinion, and ensuring that information is accurate and fit for purpose. The agreement with Pearson gives the College extensive assessment responsibilities, including setting and marking assignments, providing students with feedback and internal verification. The responsibilities differ on the Chartered Management Institute programme in that assignments and assessment criteria are prescribed by the awarding organisation. On the Australian Institute of Business programme, College responsibilities are limited to the first marking of assignments and student feedback.

Recent developments

The main recent development for the College has been a rapid increase in student numbers from just over 300 in 2013 to the present total of 861. This growth triggered a full REO. The College has been approved by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills for providing designated courses which qualify for funding support from the Student Loans Company. This has been the main area of growth, with the emphasis on UK and European Community students. The Australian Institute of Business has withdrawn from all of its agreements in Europe. The College has reached an agreement with the Institute about how all remaining students might complete their studies. Other developments include approval for part-time and distance learning modes for the Pearson BTEC Higher National programmes. The College also has approval from NCFE to offer teacher training courses, which will recruit from September 2015.

Students' contribution to the review

Students on higher education programmes at the College were invited to present a submission to the review team. The submission was provided in the form of a short report, the content of which is based on an analysis of existing course feedback activities and the 25 responses to a voluntary survey questionnaire given to students in preparation for the REO visit. The submission was written by a senior member of staff, supported by a student representative appointed to liaise with students and encourage their participation. Students were able to comment on the draft submission before it was finalised. Overall, the submission proved useful to the reviewers, although its value was limited by its status as a College summary of student opinion. The articulate and informed contributions made by students in a meeting during the visit gave the team valuable insights into the provision.

Detailed findings about Grafton College Ltd t/a Grafton College of Management Sciences

1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The College has a well-defined management structure with clear lines of responsibility. Two company directors act as Principal and Director of Finance/Human Resources. They lead a senior management team with six other staff, including a Head of Academics, Registrar and two experienced consultants who deal with academic, curriculum and quality matters. The evidence from staff and students indicates that the rapid growth in student numbers over the past year has been managed effectively. However, the process and key decisions are not consistently reported to or minuted in the meetings of the main deliberative academic committees. The management of academic standards and quality is underpinned by a range of clear and comprehensive quality manuals, incorporating policies, procedures and regulations.

1.2 The College committees have clear terms of reference, but the reporting arrangements are not always effective. The committees, which ultimately report to the Principal, include two that have a remit for academic standards. These are the Programme Management Committee, which is a single committee covering all of the programmes, and the Academic Board, which is the senior committee. There is little evidence from the minutes of any programme-level academic matters being discussed in or reported between the two committees. The Staff Student Liaison Committee deals with student concerns and reports to the Student Welfare Committee and from there directly to the Principal and Director of Finance. In consequence, there is no formal reporting route to either of the academic committees for academic matters raised at the Staff Student Liaison Committee. It is **advisable** that the College implements more rigorous and systematic reporting arrangements within and between its various committees.

1.3 The Academic Board, which reports directly to the Principal, has clearly defined responsibilities in relation to academic standards and quality, but its minutes demonstrate that these are not being fully carried out. The Academic Board membership is limited to senior staff and student representation. The Academic Board has very wide terms of reference, which include teaching, learning, assessment and ensuring compliance with the requirements of the awarding organisations. However, many of the key responsibilities included in the terms of reference are not evident in the published agendas or minutes made available for the review. For example, the minutes do not show the formal consideration of external verifier reports or learner progression. The actions arising from discussions are not always clear, and progress on actions is not routinely considered at subsequent meetings. It is therefore **advisable** for the College to ensure that the Academic Board fulfils its responsibilities for all substantive matters relating to academic standards, in line with its published terms of reference.

1.4 The College undertakes comprehensive annual programme reviews that result in highly evaluative and informative reports. The review for 2013 was facilitated by staff from one of Grafton's associate colleges. It provides a thorough and extensive report on the health of each programme, drawing upon a range of internal and external evidence, including the reports of external verifiers and feedback from students. The reports address all aspects of programme delivery, student support and assessment outcomes, identifying areas of good practice and recommendations for improvement. The reports, which are received by senior managers, have the potential to make a major formal contribution to the

future quality assurance activity of the Academic Board. These thorough and self-critical annual programme reviews, which are externally led, constitute **good practice**.

1.5 The College maintains comprehensive data on student performance, but it is unclear from minutes whether these are formally discussed and acted upon by the Academic Board. Detailed records are maintained and reviewed against defined performance indicators for use by senior College managers. The extensive data have yet to be used to analyse performance trends across student cohorts. The detailed records of assessment are approved by senior managers before being forwarded to the awarding organisation, but are not formally considered by the Academic Board.

How effectively does the College make use of external reference points to manage academic standards?

1.6 The College is making appropriate and growing use of external reference points in the management of academic standards and quality. It is reliant on awarding partners for setting standards and ensuring that programme specifications reflect the Quality Code, *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) level descriptors and Subject Benchmark Statements. There are robust internal arrangements for ensuring that the College's assessment procedures meet the requirements of its awarding organisations. A thorough mapping exercise has been undertaken to check policies and procedures against the relevant chapters of the Quality Code.

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

1.7 The College has a good record of meeting the assessment and verification requirements of its awarding partners. In the case of the Pearson provision, this is confirmed in the reports of external verifiers and the Academic Management Review Report of 2014. External verifier reports are given detailed consideration as part of the annual programme review process. The 2013 REO report confirmed the appropriateness of assessment arrangements and a range of associated policies and procedures. The policies include a clear overarching assessment policy that reflects the requirements of all its awarding organisations. The College makes systematic use of commercial plagiarism detection software in the assessment process. A published manual spells out the procedures for internal verification, and a scrutiny of assessed student work during the visit confirmed that verification is carried out consistently and effectively. At the time of the review visit, the College had yet to receive the first external verifier report for the new Chartered Management Institute programmes.

1.8 Overall, the College has effective arrangements for managing its responsibilities for academic standards. These include a clear management structure, well-considered policies and quality manuals, effective assessment and internal verification, and high quality programme review reports. There is a need to make improvements to the reporting arrangements for key committees and to ensure that the Academic Board is more effective in fulfilling its terms of reference.

The review team has **confidence** in the College's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of its awarding organisations.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

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

2.1 The management and reporting arrangements for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities are broadly as described for academic standards in paragraphs 1.1 to 1.5. The College effectively fulfils its responsibilities, using a range of policies and procedures that reflect the regulations and requirements of Pearson, its main awarding organisation. The detailed Curriculum Policy is the key document that defines College expectations about all aspects of programme delivery, student support and quality assurance. The policy has been aligned more closely with the Continuous Development Plan, in line with a recommendation from the 2013 REO. The College plans to introduce its proposed Higher National distance learning programmes within the existing suite of policies and procedures.

2.2 The introduction of module leaders is a valuable initiative that gives added formal focus to management at the curriculum level. The important role includes responsibility for standardising all aspects of module delivery within teaching groups. Module leaders have yet to be fully recognised within the management structure, for example through having representatives on the Academic Board.

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

2.3 The College is making appropriate use of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities, as described in paragraph 1.6. In response to the 2013 REO, the College has ensured that its Curriculum Policy is fully aligned with the Quality Code and the regulations of its awarding organisations.

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

2.4 The College has clear and generally effective procedures in place to assure itself of the quality of teaching and learning. Formal teaching observations are undertaken by senior staff, working within the parameters of a published teaching observation strategy. The outcomes of teaching observations are analysed by senior management, a process that informs decisions about individual and College-wide training needs.

2.5 The standard lesson observation forms that are used to record the outcomes of observed sessions might usefully be enhanced. The forms are clear and are consistently and carefully filled in. However, they do not formally require the observer to evaluate the student learning experience or whether the learning outcomes and their achievement reflect the appropriate FHEQ level descriptor. The observation process does not offer students an opportunity to record their views on the class. It would be **desirable** for the College to extend the scope of the lesson observation reporting form to record specific comment on student perceptions and FHEQ level.

2.6 Students are able to comment on teaching through module evaluations. In a meeting with the team, they confirmed their satisfaction with the quality of teaching. In particular, they value the more interactive activities, such as role play, small group work and discussions. The College acknowledges the value of extending the range of teaching and learning approaches. It would be **desirable** for the College to continue to widen the range of approaches to learning and teaching, with a view to further engaging students in their learning process.

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

2.7 A range of effective processes and procedures means that students are well supported throughout their time in the College. There is a clear and robust admissions process, a comprehensive induction, good academic tutorial support and easily accessed pastoral support. Students value the support they receive and speak highly of the help provided by the Student Welfare Team and the ease of informal access to academic staff. The Student Welfare Committee oversees all aspects of academic and pastoral support. Since the 2013 REO visit, the College has enhanced its protocols for the support of students with specific learning and physical needs. It has also appointed an Academic Adviser, who acts as a focus of academic support for the increased number of students.

2.8 The College has developed a substantial and highly effective approach to the provision of study skills. This is focused on weekly half-day classes that are timetabled for all students. For those who already possess the skills timetabled for a class, there is flexibility for them to work on other skills matched to their particular needs. Following the 2013 REO, a comprehensive study skills handbook has been produced that provides a wealth of useful advice in student-friendly language. The formally timetabled programme of study skills, which differentiates between student needs and is underpinned by a comprehensive handbook, is **good practice**.

2.9 Students express a high level of satisfaction with the academic support that is offered at different points of the assessment cycle. This includes opportunities for formative assessment and feedback prior to the formal submission date. Currently, this valuable and supportive process does not prescribe the number of formative assessments that are allowed nor does it specify a clear cut-off time in advance of the final submission. Students are given extensive and helpful written feedback on their assessed work. The feedback is provided consistently across all modules, using a standard form. In the sample of student work made available for the review, there was an occasional mismatch between the phrasing of the feedback and the grade awarded.

2.10 The College is committed to the collection and use of student opinion, and has a range of mechanisms for achieving this. The mechanisms include module and programme evaluation questionnaires and a system of student representatives. In response to the 2013 REO report, the student representatives elected for each programme now have the right to attend all College committees, although not all do so. Representatives receive training for their role and the Staff Student Liaison Committee offers a formal platform for them to raise and discuss issues.

How effectively does the College develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?

2.11 The College has clear and detailed protocols and guidance for the recruitment, induction and continuous professional development of its staff. It is diligent in applying its appointment criteria and checking procedures during the recruitment of new academic staff. New staff comment favourably on the thoroughness of their College and course inductions.

2.12 Staff development takes place within the context of clear strategic and operational policies and protocols. Senior managers draw upon a range of evidence to determine development priorities. These include the outcomes of staff appraisal, lesson observations, student feedback, external verifier reports and open discussions with staff. Regular staff development activities include in-house training sessions, attendance at external courses and support for individual staff to gain teaching and higher academic qualifications. The College continues to use its in-house programme of activities to embed staff understanding and use of the Quality Code. Other development priorities have resulted

in carefully designed standardisation activities for staff teaching on the Pearson Higher National programmes. Staff development is a positive feature of the College, as reported by the Pearson external verifier.

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

2.13 The College has made substantial investment to ensure that there are sufficient learning resources for the range of programmes and increased number of students. Academic staff are appropriate in number and suitably qualified. Additional funding has resulted in notable improvements to the computing laboratories and equipment. The library has been enhanced by the subscription to a large commercial electronic library. Students express general satisfaction with the learning resources provided and their access to them. The Pearson 2014 Academic Management Review confirmed that all quality processes were in place for the provision of staff and physical resources. The College directors take action when the need for additional learning resources is identified, but it is unclear how resource planning is managed through the committee structure or how the Academic Board carries out its published responsibilities.

2.14 Overall, the College has effective arrangements in place for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities. These are underpinned by a range of appropriate policies and procedures. A study skills programme is an impressive feature of the high quality student support, while the structured approach to staff development is a positive feature. There is scope to further enhance some features of teaching and learning, and there is a lack of clarity in the operation of some aspects of the committee structure.

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

3 Information about learning opportunities

How effectively does the College communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

3.1 The College understands its responsibilities for the publication of information about learning opportunities, and communicates effectively with its students and staff. It provides a comprehensive range of information to students and staff, mainly through the website and virtual learning environment (VLE). The information includes a mission statement, strategic plan, detailed handbooks, marketing materials, policies and strategies. A suite of impressive quality manuals incorporates the regulations and requirements of awarding organisations. The College website is attractive and easy to navigate. Students confirm that it provides a valuable source of accurate information when deciding where to study. The VLE, which has a link from the website, includes a wide range of College and programme information. It also contains awarding organisation materials, such as programme specifications and regulations. Students are particularly appreciative of the many useful learning and study materials they are able to access. The College provides training and guidance for students in the use of the VLE.

3.2 In response to the 2013 REO, the College has improved the information published for students. Student handbooks have been updated to give them an increased student focus, adding information on student welfare, teaching and assessment. The College has

developed a unified handbook for study skills and is providing enhanced information on progression opportunities to other higher education institutions.

3.3 The College is committed to ensuring transparency in the availability of information about learning opportunities. This is evident in the information that is publicly accessible on the website, which includes policies and procedures, quality manuals, external verifier reports and other independent quality reports.

How effective are the College's arrangements for assuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy?

3.4 In response to recommendations in the 2013 REO report, the College has developed a policy and procedures for assuring the consistency and quality of public information, including version control. The public information policy outlines explicit requirements and responsibilities for information on the College website, including six-monthly monitoring checks. However, the oversight of printed marketing materials is less clearly prescribed in the policy. During the visit, the team noted a poster on display that contained potentially misleading information about progression opportunities. Although the information had been provided by an awarding organisation, the College had used it on marketing material that carries its name. It is therefore **advisable** that the College ensures that the publications policy explicitly addresses the production and approval of printed marketing materials.

3.5 The new policy for version control provides clear formal guidance on versions of procedures, policies and plans. A revision history table and document control table indicate each stage of development and who has responsibility for it.

3.6 Overall, the College recognises all of the information for which it is responsible and has appropriate mechanisms for ensuring that information is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy. The College produces most information electronically. The website and VLE contain a wide range of valuable information and are well managed. There is a need to ensure that the clear public information policy gives more explicit attention to the control of printed marketing materials.

<p>The team concludes that reliance can be placed on the information that the College produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.</p>
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Action plan³

Grafton College Ltd t/a Grafton College of Management Sciences action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight November 2014						
Good practice	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The review team identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within the College:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thorough and self-critical annual programme reviews, which are externally led (paragraph 1.4) 	Annual programme reviews contribute towards ensuring the health of programmes and make a formal contribution to the quality assurance role of the Academic Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that programme reviews are used consistently to report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> alignment of the provision with relevant external reference points extent to which programmes are achieving the intended learning outcomes good practice and how it might be shared to enhance programme delivery the embedding of relevant practical skills 	December 2015	Academic Board Members	Directors	Academic Board and Programme Management Committee minutes

³ The College 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 College's awarding organisations.

		<p>in lesson planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The College will provide in-house staff training to further support the implementation of its quality assurance procedures. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a formally timetabled study skills programme that differentiates between student needs and is underpinned by a comprehensive handbook (paragraphs 2.8, 3.2). 	The study skills programme continues to be highly effective and supports students in achieving their learning outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to embed the study skills programme within the teaching timetables. Monitor the delivery of the programme to ensure it is providing relevant and differentiated support for students. 	September 2015	Programme Management Committee and Student Welfare Officer	Academic Board	Academic Board and Programme Management Committee minutes
Advisable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The team considers that it is advisable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement more rigorous and systematic reporting arrangements within and between its various committees (paragraphs 1.1, 1.2, 2.13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To streamline the procedures and clarify the resource planning and decision making processes. To enable the actions taken within committees to be tracked through the minutes and associated records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise management and committee structures, along with their terms of reference. Introduce clear reporting routes within and between committees. Link the Staff Student Liaison and Programme Management Committees to enhance student engagement. 	April 2015	Registrar and Senior Administrator and Senior Management	Directors	Management and Committee Structures and Terms of References, along with relevant committee minutes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the Academic Board fulfils its responsibilities for all substantive matters relating to academic standards (paragraphs 1.3, 1.5, 2.2, 2.13) 	<p>The Academic Board provides effective management oversight in line with its terms of references.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Academic Board terms of references to ensure they are fit for purpose. Focus the activities of the Academic Board on its revised terms of references. Where appropriate, transfer operational matters to other relevant committees by setting up standard agenda items. Include course leaders in the Academic Board membership. Consider assessment data as part of the formal business of the Academic Board. 	<p>June 2015</p>	<p>Senior Management and Academic Board</p>	<p>Directors</p>	<p>Terms of References and relevant committee minutes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the publications policy explicitly addresses the production and approval of printed marketing materials (paragraph 3.4). 	<p>To present the higher education provision Grafton College offers through marketing and publications in a consistent, accurate and professional manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the publications policy and procedures to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explicit production and approval processes for print materials clear guidelines for marketing materials. Clarify the objectives for the publication of marketing materials. 	<p>April 2015</p>	<p>Registrar and Senior Administrator and Marketing Manager</p>	<p>Directors</p>	<p>Revised Publications Policy and related guidelines and Publications Audit Schedules</p>

Desirable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The team considers that it would be desirable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extend the scope of the lesson observation reporting form (paragraph 2.5) 	Lesson observations can be used to inform and enhance teaching and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include student views within the lesson observation process. Revise the lesson observation form to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an evaluation of the student learning experience comment on whether the learning outcomes and their achievements reflect the appropriate FHEQ level descriptors. Academic Board to monitor lesson observation outcomes to inform staff development. 	December 2015	Programme Management Committee	Academic Board	Lesson observations and Student feedback; Programme Management Committee and Academic Board minutes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue to widen the range of approaches to learning and teaching (paragraph 2.6). 	Enhanced student engagement and its significance in the learning and teaching process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of learning and teaching methods widened through staff development, including sharing key outcomes of lesson observations. 	September 2015	Programme Management Committee	Academic Board	Management Committee and Academic Board minutes

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/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/Educational-Oversight.

Glossary

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

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

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

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.

awarding organisation An organisation authorised to award a particular qualification; an organisation recognised by Ofqual to award Ofqual-regulated qualifications.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed or recognised to perform a particular function. QAA has been recognised by UK Visas and Immigration as a designated body for the purpose of providing educational oversight.

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

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

external examiner An independent expert appointed by an institution to comment on student achievement in relation to established academic standards and to look at approaches to assessment.

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 review processes.

highly trusted sponsor An organisation that the UK Government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of UK Visas and Immigration'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 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.

operational definition A formal definition of a term, which establishes 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.

provider (s) (of higher education) Organisations that deliver higher education. In the UK they may be a degree-awarding body or another organisation that offers programmes of higher education on behalf of degree-awarding bodies or awarding organisations. In the context of Review for Specific Course Designation 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').

quality See **academic quality**.

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. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

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 standards 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 for higher education qualifications** and **Subject Benchmark Statements**. See also **academic standards**.

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