



International Quality Review of the International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai

November 2019

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About this review

This is a report of an International Quality Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at the International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai. The review took place from 12 to 13 November 2019 and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

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- Mrs Sala Kamkosi Khulumula (student reviewer).

International Quality Review (IQR) offers institutions outside the UK the opportunity to have a review by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The review benchmarks the institutions' quality assurance processes against international quality assurance standards set out in Part 1 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG).¹

In International Quality Review, the QAA review team:

- makes conclusions against each of the 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the ESG
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- comes to an overall conclusion as to whether the institution meets the standards for International Quality Review.

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

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission.² A dedicated section explains the method for [International Quality Review](#)³ and has links to other informative documents. For an explanation of terms, see the [glossary](#) at the end of this report.

¹ www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg

² www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/training-and-services/iqr

Key findings

Executive summary

Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai (BNUZ) is a full-time ordinary university approved by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and co-sponsored by Beijing Normal University and the Zhuhai Municipal People's Government for undergraduate education.

According to the regulations of the MOE, Beijing Normal University is responsible for the teaching, organisation and management of BNUZ. Beijing Normal University has oversight of the quality and level of its education; in doing so it dispatches experienced management teams to take charge of the administration and teaching management of BNUZ.

Since its establishment, students have come from 27 provinces (autonomous regions and province-level municipalities) as well as Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. At present, there are approximately 23,000 students at BNUZ.

BNUZ has 14 schools (faculties) including the International Business Faculty (IBF). Together the schools deliver 61 undergraduate majors in eight disciplines.

The subject of this review is IBF which was founded in July 2009 and is the offspring of the former International Finance College, Business School and International Faculty. It has five departments - Finance; International Economics and Trade; Accounting; Business Administration; and E-commerce, which covers the two major disciplines of Economics and Management. IBF has the largest number of students at BNUZ. At present, there are more than 3,800 students at IBF.

IBF has a number of principles underpinning its educational activity. These include the school-wide idea of 'people-oriented, pursuing excellence' and the educational idea of 'pursuing studies, cultivating morality while benefiting the world'. IBF is dedicated to internationalised education through actively expanding international high-quality educational resources. It is committed to cultivating high-quality applied talents with excellent humanities literacy, solid professional foundation and strong practical ability through application-oriented education. IBF pursues the value of 'responsibility, inclusion, ambition and innovation'. It is committed to fostering virtue through education and to promoting an ethical business culture. It seeks to become a national well-known and regional leading business school.

Currently, IBF has established partnerships with more than 20 universities in the UK, the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany, France, Korea, and Spain. All partner universities have signed memoranda of cooperation with BNUZ. A key partnership is with St Mary's University in Canada. This partnership provides for the delivery of a Bachelor of Commerce programme with a major in finance and has recruited students from 2014. This programme is the only undergraduate finance programme in China that conducts its four-year training domestically and awards internationally-recognised double degrees.

Currently, IBF is experiencing three key challenges. The first of these is to determine ways of continuously improving the quality of prospective students. The second relates to the desire to improve the teaching and scientific research capacity of teachers. The third is to determine ways of improving the quality of the postgraduate offer and the employment of graduates. It has a number of strategies in place to help it address these challenges.

The QAA review team was provided with a self-evaluation document and extensive set of documentary evidence by IBF. The review team also visited IBF for three days and was able to hold meetings with the President of BNUZ, the Dean of Faculty, senior staff, academic

staff, support staff, students, graduates and employers. The team also had the opportunity to view the range of facilities and resources available on campus.

In summary, the team found examples of significant good practice and was able to make some recommendations for improvement.

With regard to significant good practice, the team identified three key areas. The first is connected to the obvious care taken to support students and their parents in the transition from high school to university. The fact that dedicated telephone lines and staff are put in place for this work is an example of the care taken.

An initiative called the Muduo • Lishang programme, which has been put in place to encourage staff and students to work collaboratively on developing research skills, was recognised by the team as good practice and is an example of the steps being taken to address some of the key challenges recognised by IBF and mentioned in the paragraphs above.

The team also identified a comprehensive range of support for students across the whole of their educational journey. In particular, the support arrangements are designed and managed in a way that ensures timely intervention when this is required.

In a small number of areas, the team identified the possibility of improvement and makes recommendations to address these. The first relates to the fact that IBF has introduced a new committee - the Teaching Quality Assurance Committee - and recommends that IBF undertakes an evaluation of the work of this Committee and its impact on other committees to ensure originally intended objectives are being met.

The team also recommends that IBF considers adopting a more detailed approach to recording the business of committees so that decision-making and actions are clear and auditable.

Finally, the team saw examples of more senior students acting in a student-support capacity. This approach may well be very beneficial in the support of students' learning and welfare, so the team recommends that a systematic evaluation of this approach is undertaken with the intention of identifying good practice and sharing it or making improvements where necessary.

Overall, the team reached the conclusion that the management of quality at IBF aligns with the European Standards and Guidelines and that all 10 Standards are **met**.

QAA's conclusions about the International Quality Review of the International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai

The QAA review team reached the following conclusions about the higher education provision at the International Quality Review of the International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai.

European Standards and Guidelines

The International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai meets all of the 10 ESG Standards and Guidelines.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at the International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University Zhuhai.

- The provision of dedicated staff and telephone lines to provide support to students and their parents concerning issues relating to the transition from high school to university (ESG Standard 1.4).
- The Muduo • Lishang programme which provides a platform for students to deepen their knowledge, develop research skills and work collaboratively (ESG Standard 1.6).
- The comprehensive support provided to students throughout their student journey, that ensures timely intervention where required (ESG Standard 1.6).

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to the International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai.

- Undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of the recently introduced committee to ensure it is meeting intended objectives (ESG Standard 1.1).
- Adopt a more detailed and explicit approach to recording the business of meetings that explicitly conveys the decision-making process and actions agreed (ESG Standard 1.2).
- Implement an approach to capturing and disseminating the experiences and good practice of students who are working in a student support capacity (ESG Standard 1.6).
- Put in place a systematic evaluation of the services provided by students working in a student support capacity (ESG Standard 1.6).

Explanation of the findings about the International Business Faculty of Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

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

Standard 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

Findings

1.1 Beijing Normal University, Zhuhai (BNUZ) has a framework of quality assurance policies, procedures and systems, including: Undergraduate Teaching Quality Assessment; the setting of teaching objectives and teaching inspections through the year, with the results overseen by the Office of Academic Affairs and IBF management; teaching evaluation and coaching; teaching quality monitoring, motivation and feedback; and student evaluation and conversations with students.

1.2 The Office of Academic Affairs provides regulatory support and administration. There are university, faculty and departmental committees with roles in the oversight of quality assurance. The IBF Academic Committee reports to the University Academic Committee and the IBF Teaching Guidance Committee reports to the University Teaching Guidance Committee. The University Academic Committee has ultimate oversight of standards and quality within the University. The International Business Faculty (IBF) has recently created a Teaching Quality Assurance Committee with the aim of increasing the involvement of staff and students. Students and staff contribute to quality assurance through a variety of surveys, staff and student representatives - including the Students' Union, and participation in committees and meetings.

1.3 The review team noted the high level of self-reflection and commitment of the IBF leadership to the proactive development of quality. This is evidenced through the work undertaken to enhance quality assurance systems and to monitor the effectiveness of outcomes, such as the creation of a Faculty Quality Assurance Committee. Senior managers acknowledge that there may be overlaps between this and committees already in existence, but they are committed to work further to strengthen the effectiveness of the oversight from the various committees to ensure the efficient resolution of quality assurance issues. Given that the Teaching Quality Assurance Committee has only recently been introduced, it is too early to assess the effectiveness of this initiative and the impact it may have on existing committees and their roles. The review team therefore **recommends** that IBF undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of the recently-introduced committee to ensure it is meeting intended objectives.

1.4 The BNUZ strategy and philosophy underlying quality assurance is clear. BNUZ says that it bases its quality assurance policies on a philosophy and priorities of 'people-cooperation and excellence pursuit'. It is committed to cultivate 'high-quality applied talents with excellent humanities literacy, solid professional foundation and strong practical ability'. IBF recognises and values international education as a means of developing a strong practical ability through application-oriented education.

1.5 The University's quality assurance system fits firmly within national and regional requirements. BNUZ is under external scrutiny through the Department of Education of Guangdong Province and a recently-founded Advisory Committee provides a further source of external insight. Since 2018, undergraduate programme specialities have had to be mapped against the Higher Education Undergraduate Program Teaching Quality National Standard. BNUZ also has to apply the Specialty Catalog and Introduction of Undergraduate Course of Common Colleges and Universities (2012) to the major core courses in the talent training programme of specialities. Beijing Normal University (BNU) retains significant

oversight over quality assurance at BNUZ and is committed to supporting the development of increased organisational capacity and resources for BNUZ.

1.6 Students confirmed that they were made aware, through orientation and beyond, of relevant university policies including that on academic integrity. The IBF trial quality assurance policy has been published on the BNUZ website and IBF will surely promote awareness of its newly-developing quality framework.

1.7 In summary, both the University and Faculty have policies for quality assurance, and both are integral to the strategic management of IBF. It was clear to the review team, from its analysis of the documentary evidence and discussions with the senior management team and teaching staff, that IBF takes quality assurance seriously and that all are involved in developing IBF's approach to quality. The voice of external stakeholders is heard at both university and faculty level. Taken together, these factors assured the team that Standard 1.1 is **met**.

Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes

Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Findings

2.1 There is a defined process for the design and approval of programmes which follows the regulations of the Ministry of Education and the Department of Education of Guangdong Province. This provides for a process of research and design in IBF leading to the creation of a programme. The planning process includes analysis of market needs and expectations, testing against strategic requirements, programme mapping, the setting of teaching objectives and assurance of the provision of resources. There is also provision for external academic and business consultation.

2.2 Since 2018, undergraduate programme specialities have had to be mapped against the government's Higher Education Undergraduate Program Teaching Quality National Standard. There is a four-year undergraduate curriculum with a total credit of 160, including common core, major core, common elective and major elective.

2.3 The application form is sent to IBF Teaching Guidance Committee and the Academic Committee. IBF Academic Committee approves the programme for strategic fit and market and IBF Teaching Guidance Committee approves the curriculum. The documentation is then sent to BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs for approval. Following a period of consultation, the proposal is sent to the Department of Education of Guangdong Province for governmental approval and then to the Ministry of Education for confirmation.

2.4 Subsequently, three to four years later, the Guangdong Provincial Academic Degree Committee considers an application to enable degrees to be awarded for the new programme. The team heard that applications for degree-awarding authority are customarily successful. The most recent successful application for degree awarding that has been approved by Guangdong Provincial Academic Degrees Committee was the accounting major.

2.5 There has been little programme approval in practice and the brevity of committee minutes and records also made it difficult for the team to establish a detailed audit trail of programme approval. The most recent example is the accounting major, which was approved in 2012. As mentioned above, the application of degree awarding to accounting major was approved by Guangdong Provincial Academic Degrees Committee in 2016. It is clear from the records and from the final programme documentation that the programmes were designed robustly and approved correctly through the committee structure, as well as meeting the requirements of the regional and national government. This includes credit frameworks and learning objectives at course and programme level. However, as noted earlier in this paragraph, the minutes and records do not establish a fully transparent audit trail. The team therefore **recommends** that IBF adopts a more detailed and explicit approach to recording the business of meetings that conveys the decision-making process and actions agreed.

2.6 The University approves a range of international partnerships, including jointly delivered programmes, dual degrees, study abroad and exchange programmes. There is an

effective process of due diligence leading to the approval of a time-limited Memorandum of Collaboration for three to five years. The process is overseen by the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of International Exchange and Cooperation and the University President.

2.7 BNUZ and IBF together have formal processes for the design and approval of their programmes. Programme approval ensures that awards resulting from successful completion of the programme meet regional and national requirements and are clearly specified. The team therefore concludes that Standard 1.2 is **met**.

Standard 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

Findings

3.1 IBF uses a variety of different teaching methods that are designed to address specific learning outcomes, professional behaviour, skills and knowledge acquisition. These teaching techniques include: problem-based teaching; case study; simulation/experiential approaches; and application of theory in practice placements. Students have access to BNUZ's Education online system which provides a range of learning resources, including course and assessment information and an interactive Question and Answer forum. BNUZ's Intelligent Campus Platform records student progression, including course attendance, assessment, achievements and other related information. IBF staff have access to each student's record.

3.2 If the same course is delivered by multiple teachers, IBF appoints experienced senior teachers as course leaders to coordinate course objectives and learning and teaching methodologies, including assessment. Course content and pedagogy is overseen by each Head of Department.

3.3 IBF also offers students the opportunity to participate in 'autonomous development' in which students independently (but under the supervision of teachers): identify their own development goals; design course content; organise educational activities; and select learning methodologies. Currently this learning approach is mostly restricted to computer skills training and media operation and management courses. The Muduo • Lishang programme was introduced in 2018 - it provides an opportunity for selected students to work with faculty, to deepen their subject knowledge, develop research skills and to experience working collaboratively; and is good practice (see also paragraph 6.4).

3.4 IBF organises faculty-wide seminars for teaching staff to facilitate the dissemination of innovative teaching and learning methodologies. In addition, staff are supported to attend national pedagogical seminars to promote innovation in teaching. Each semester, BNUZ organises a series of university-wide teaching demonstration seminars to promote innovative practice across all faculties in the institution. IBF requires all teachers to attend at least one demonstration during each semester.

3.5 The quality of teaching is monitored by the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs, which carries out classroom inspections (of teaching) at the start, middle and end of semesters. If any issue arises, IBF will monitor and resolve the issue and report to the Office of Academic Affairs. In addition, IBF requires teaching staff to submit a self-assessment survey of teaching status mid-semester. This facilitates reflection on teaching methodology, teacher strengths/weaknesses and overall effectiveness.

3.6 When formulating course assessments, teachers are expected to adopt diversified approaches appropriate to the course content and learning objectives. Examples of different modes of assessment include: classroom discussion; presentation of papers; online quizzes; in-class tests; case study and written examination. In accordance with the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs, information on course assessment and the associated criteria are communicated to students at orientation and is available online. The Undergraduate Course Assessment and Evaluation document, maintained by the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs, outlines overall assessment requirements, grading and recording. Courses delivered by teaching teams are jointly marked.

3.7 Student assessments are uploaded to the China National Knowledge Infrastructure system to identify plagiarism.

3.8 IBF uses, in accordance with the BNUZ policy framework, a range of mechanisms to assure academic standards. The key components include: evaluation of teachers by students; classroom observation by supervisors; peer observation; demonstration courses; dissemination of innovative practice; mid-semester reflection; and inspection of course material. Students provide feedback via the Teaching Management System. This evaluation includes the teacher's classroom management, course content, teaching resources and student-staff interaction. Feedback is shared with the teacher as part of the reflection and improvement process. Student feedback is monitored by the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs, which updates the IBF's Deputy Dean responsible for teaching. The Deputy Dean for Teaching will engage underperforming staff as required. Overall in 2017-18, students indicated 99.4% satisfaction concerning courses marked as 'highly satisfied' or 'satisfied'.

3.9 In addition to the online feedback, IBF also organises staff-student meetings mid-semester with student representatives. Students meet with Deans, Directors and Heads of Support Offices to discuss teaching, course content and any areas of concern.

3.10 Student complaints may be raised at any point with the Head Teacher, IBF's Office of Student Affairs, and/or the Deputy Dean. IBF makes available meeting rooms to facilitate students who wish to raise issues with teaching staff and/or counsellors.

3.11 If a student is unhappy with an assessment result, he/she may appeal the grade within two weeks of the results publishing, by applying for Grade Review. Upon receiving an application, the course teacher concerned, and the IBF Office of Academic Affairs will undertake a review of the assessment. The outcome of this review will be confirmed by the Deputy Dean for Teaching and communicated to the student.

3.12 The review team confirmed that IBF engages external stakeholders across a range of mechanisms - including student placement/internship feedback, surveys and advisory panels - to ensure that courses and programmes are relevant to the needs of the economy and that students are prepared for employment. Students and industry partners are briefed prior to placements and internships taking place and are surveyed about their experience upon completion, in order to enhance the next cycle.

3.13 IBF encourages a sense of autonomy in learners by supporting opportunities for student involvement in their learning in a variety of ways - involvement in a wide range of societies and six sub-modules such as academic learning, professional development, industrial competitions and international projects. Student input to autonomous development is guided by relevant faculty.

3.14 Feedback is sought from students at regular intervals which is mainly received through the class representation mechanism and surveys.

3.15 The review team had an opportunity to observe a demonstration of IBF's virtual learning environment which captures and analyses student assessment, which in turn generates student and class performance profiles. This real-time data enables faculty, as appropriate, to adjust their teaching content to take account of any knowledge variabilities in the student cohort. IBF tracks student progress in a variety of ways, including through the Education online platform which provides a range of functions such as online quizzes and interactive questions and answers. The team concluded that IBF has an effective framework for the approval of examination questions and the recording and management of grade information. BNUZ has a suite of policies that provide a framework for the regulation of course assessments and examinations.

3.16 The review team concludes that BNUZ supports a diverse student body and enables a flexible approach to learning, which facilitates students' involvement in their own learning. An appropriate assessment framework is in place to safeguard academic standards and ensure a consistent and fair approach to student assessment. Consequently, the review team confirms that Standard 1.3 is **met**.

Standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Institutions should consistently apply predefined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

Findings

4.1 The Admissions Management Measures of BNUZ sets out the admission and selection process of applicants. These procedures are aligned with the requirements of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and are underpinned by the principles of fair competition and selection, transparent procedures, merit-based and subject to BNUZ management oversight. The admissions process is also overseen by the Guangdong Provincial Admissions Office. The BNUZ recruitment publicists provide advice on assessment, supervision and counselling-related services to students.

4.2 Student recruitment publicity materials are developed by IBF, in conjunction with the BNUZ Office of Admission and Career Services. Each year a group is convened under the leadership of the Dean of IBF, to review and update the IBF prospectus and other publicity materials, including video. The prospectus covers a range of topics, including: Introduction to IBF and the staff; programme listing and information about the programmes; career development; graduate case studies; and images of the facilities.

4.3 Following the student admission process, IBF assigns staff to dedicated telephone lines to deal with queries from students and/or parents concerning any issues or questions they may have about the transfer from high school to university. Such matters may relate to programme and study information, accommodation, fees and registration arrangements. The provision of dedicated staff and telephone lines to provide support to students and their parents concerning issues relating to the transition from high school to university is **good practice**.

4.4 Orientation sessions are organised for new students and include information about the programme, course selection, career opportunities and related matters. Under the BNUZ's course selection procedures, IBF's Office of Academic Affairs oversees students' online course selection. Students who wish to change courses will be given an opportunity to do so in the first week of the semester.

4.5 In February 2017, the MOE circulated 'The Regulation on Student Management in Regular Higher Education Institutions' to support a more robust framework for the management and quality of education, to enhance the student experience, and to promote the rights and interests of students. The Regulation covers a range of procedural mechanisms deployed within universities, including enrolment and registration, course selection, assessment, course exemption; repeat examinations, student withdrawal and graduation.

4.6 Student entry qualifications and registration details are verified by IBF and reported to the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs.

4.7 IBF and BNUZ have developed procedures to guide students who want to transfer to a different major and/or a different academic department. There are procedures to guide the consideration and recognition of courses students have previously passed.

4.8 Student progression is monitored throughout the year, as well as student involvement in extracurricular activities. The Office of Student Affairs monitors and reports on student development. Counsellors and tutors are available to support students who are experiencing any difficulties, whether academic or personal. Students experiencing

academic difficulties will meet with the head teacher and a personalised study plan will be developed. To support faculty with class management, a number of senior students are recruited as peer mentors.

4.9 Students are encouraged to participate in national and international knowledge competitions and can apply for school funding. To deepen student subject knowledge, students can apply to assist academic staff with research projects under the Muduo • Lishang programme (see also paragraph 6.4).

4.10 BNUZ has established regulations for degree awards which are in accordance with MOE regulations and the Guangdong Provincial Academic Degrees Committee. Students who meet the degree requirements are approved for graduation. Students who do not meet the full graduation criteria may be considered for a bachelor's degree certificate, subject to minimum credit attainment.

4.11 The review team confirmed the effectiveness of the recruitment and admission process, including a week-long orientation programme for new students. IBF operates within the BNUZ regulatory framework for the admission of students and certification of awards, which is, in turn, aligned with the regulatory requirements of the Guangdong Provisional Government and MOE of the PRC.

4.12 A wide range of professional counselling and other support services are provided to all students, which are designed to assist students with personal and/or academic concerns that might interfere with their academic progression. The review team concluded that the processes for the admission of students, progression and the arrangements for graduation and certification are appropriately aligned with the requirements of Standard 1.4 and that the Standard is **met**.

Standard 1.5 Teaching staff

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Findings

5.1 IBF utilises a rigorous recruitment process to attract high-level talent, with teachers having a minimum of a master's qualification and, among the full-time teachers, 46% have senior professional titles, 47% have doctoral degrees at home and abroad and 77% have overseas learning experience. The BNUZ Staff Appointment Committee is responsible for the evaluation and appointment of lecturers' professional and technical positions, and the examination and approval of salary promotion of teaching staff. Teachers are governed by the standards for teaching qualifications and the compliance of use of foreign/bilingual teaching of BNUZ, giving IBF a diverse group of teaching staff in age, experience and background. IBF uses four academic titles for teaching staff: Professor, Associate Professor, Lecturer and Junior, which have an employee ratio of 11%, 35%, 47% and 7% respectively.

5.2 Vacant positions are created by the demand of academic activities, future developments and benchmarking with other universities which then feeds into the operational recruitment plans for IBF. Approval for the vacant positions is given by BNUZ's Human Resources Office who then publicly post the vacancies in conjunction with IBF. BNUZ's Human Resources Committee work together with IBF in recruitment, interviews and appointments, with the IBF Staff Recruitment Working Group taking part in the selection of applicants and running the trial lectures and interviews. There are some exceptions to the recruitment process for recruiting retired staff and international staff - the Teaching Affairs Committee oversees applications for retired staff; for teachers who retire from IBF, the IBF Office of Administration and Finance will report to the BNUZ Human Resource Office for recruitment; while international recruits have to undergo work permit and visa checks. All recruited teaching staff follow the same recruitment process where they have their qualifications and work experience checked and undergo an interview with the Dean of IBF.

5.3 Newly-hired teachers are given an orientation by the BNUZ Human Resources Office, IBF Office of Administration and Finance, IBF Office of Academic Affairs, and other IBF administrative offices who provide training and workshops to help them integrate into the ethos of IBF. They undergo a maximum probation period of six months and undertake continuous development throughout their work, as identified within the annual staff assessment meetings, which allows them to undertake internal and external training programmes to upgrade their skills.

5.4 Teachers are expected to undertake personal training, academic research, social services, cultural heritage and innovation as per the BNUZ/IBF regulations; the School and University provides opportunities that include various types of continuing education and training support that will enhance teachers' abilities and build their professional skills. The positions of those who are on one-year academic leave for PhD study are reserved and paid with a minimum wage. IBF also provides financial support of up to 50% of tuition for PhD study in domestic universities. Other funding is available for activities such as visiting scholars and postdoctoral exchange programmes.

5.5 BNUZ has a Teaching Support Centre that focuses on teaching innovation, internal learning and communications with the sole aim of providing support and consultation for teacher development with evidence provided of training and development activities undertaken.

5.6 IBF has a mechanism in place for the promotion of teachers that is regulated by BNUZ and overseen by an IBF working group, which makes recommendations to the Human Resources Office for final evaluation, with the final result resting jointly with the Personnel Committee and Job Appointment Committee.

5.7 In order to encourage and support research, IBF strategically plans the management of research through the Plan for Promoting IBF Teachers' Academic Research Ability. The aim is to publish papers and apply for research projects which IBF supports financially. Teachers are also encouraged to receive overseas training to help improve their pedagogy in collaborative research.

5.8 Since May 2018, IBF sets up a Muduo • Lishang Forum that has allowed the invitation of famous scholars. Under this initiative, they have produced seven high-level academic reports and organised academic activities that entail the presentation of research, communication of academic ideas and academic debate. The Forum also allows for the formulation of research teams that include collaboration with students. IBF has financially supported the research undertaken as well as the academic papers published in both local and international journals. Those involved speak enthusiastically of the opportunities available to enhance their research and pedagogy, and appreciate working collaboratively with students, international scholars and the wider community.

5.9 The *Regulations of Teaching Supervision* at BNUZ is the key document that underpins teachers' supervision. During the year, teachers are appraised in different ways: through random classroom coaching undertaken by the University in conjunction with the School; routine monitoring that is overseen by the Office of Academic Affairs; and end-of-course feedback that is given by students and teachers. Teaching supervisors are senior teachers who observe junior teachers and feed back on course assessment and teaching methods; their role is to advise and give recommendations to help enhance the junior teachers in their role. These then feed into an annual assessment that is overseen by the Assessment Working Group who report to the Office of Academic Affairs. Annual staff assessments look at the teacher's moral performance, teaching activities, academic research and social service. The plans formulated from the annual staff assessments act as the basis for teaching staff development and these are effectively actioned and followed up. IBF Directors from each department report on the assessment results to the working group who, in turn, give final approval.

5.10 Since 2009, BNUZ has had policies in place that encourage young teachers to enhance their skills by recognising them with awards; to date 25 IBF teachers have won these awards. IBF also participates in the award for Excellent Course category that is run by BNUZ, with one of the courses IBF runs winning the title in 2018. These awards give teachers the opportunity to identify and disseminate good practice, which offers the opportunity for other teachers from within IBF and BNUZ to drop into the sessions that have won for the best courses.

5.11 The effective approach taken in recruiting, developing and supporting teaching staff ensures that IBF staff are appropriately knowledgeable and skilled for their roles. The team therefore concludes that Standard 1.5 is **met**.

Standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support

Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

Findings

6.1 The resource budget is completed in June and managed by the Dean with final approval given by the University. Every June, IBF begins to compile the budget plan for the next academic year and submits it to the Finance Department of BNUZ for preliminary examination and summary. After examination and permission, the budget of IBF needs to be implemented in accordance with the budget plan. Fixed asset requisition is based on an IBF budget that adheres to the rules and regulations of the School and is the responsibility of the third-level manager to oversee.

6.2 The team was given a comprehensive account of the physical resources available including classrooms, the library, laboratory (Demonstration Centre for Economic and Management Experiment teaching), self-study rooms, office and equipment. Students can access vacant classrooms through the BNUZ online system as long as an application through the online system gets approved.

6.3 The library is well-stocked with contemporary books, journals and e-resources. It has 1.3 million print books and more than two million e-books, 2,000 subscription newspapers, seven databases in both Chinese and English, 2,000 academic journals and diverse databases such as CNKI, Chaoxing, Journals of Economics, Resset, SpringerLink, EB Online and NSTL. The library also houses seven reading rooms, a multimedia room, five general seminar rooms, an audiovisual seminar room and 16 leisure academic seminar rooms. IBF also has access to the public laboratory of BNUZ as additional support when needed. The library also provides short 60-minute classes to help students develop computer software skills. To guarantee that the resources meet academic standards, academic staff are consulted as part of course planning, and student feedback on the use of resources is also taken into consideration.

6.4 The Demonstration Centre houses four well-resourced laboratories that are assisted by an online platform and software where students can undertake learning in a real-life simulation as part of their practical experimental learning. Students commented that this case study, problem-based, learning environment prepares them for real-world scenarios and has been useful when on internships, where employers have positively commented on the students' confidence within work settings. The Demonstration Centre is also utilised for students to undertake and participate in research as part of the Muduo • Lishang programme which encourages and supports students to be involved in their own learning. Muduo • Lishang is a new programme which is funded with the aim of improving the quality of both teaching and research. It encourages student and staff engagement; provides funding for students to attend conferences; assists students in research and publication of papers. It is a highly competitive programme and students welcome this initiative and have suggested the programme be extended further. IBF management informed the review team of their intention to roll the programme forward in the future. The programme plays a significant role in developing and supporting students as autonomous learners, and the team therefore identify the Muduo • Lishang programme, which provides a platform for students to deepen their knowledge, develop research skills and work collaboratively, as **good practice**.

6.5 IBF has an established student support system that keeps the student at the heart of services that include consulting, studying assistants, financial aid packages, academic

research guidance and mental health consulting. Support services at IBF are recognised as part of the quality assurance system with both support services and consulting services feeding into the quality feedback loop. The key student support teams include teachers, the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Student Affairs, the Office of Career Service, the Office of International Exchange and Cooperation, the Office of BNUZ-SMU Programme, and the Office of Administration and Finance.

6.6 The Office of Student Affairs has the primary responsibility in the provision of counsellors, disciplinary action and student artistic activities as well as mental health consulting. The management of students' mental health is governed by the BNUZ/IBF guidelines on how to handle mental health emergencies. At the admission stage, the IBF working group review the physical and mental health status of new students. Counsellors utilise the early warning notices to support the students in their learning by creating plans that are specifically tailored to the students' needs. To ensure that each student has both fair and equal internship opportunities as well as guidance, an instructor will be assigned by IBF to each student to provide relevant guidance. The team was informed that the Students' Union collects the opinions of the students on the support services and feeds them back to the corresponding departments. The IBF Students' Union feeds back the problems to IBF, and BNUZ Students' Union feeds back the problems to the University.

6.7 In order to provide an effective support system for students, IBF has a budget that allows support staff the opportunity to develop and undertake internal and external training programmes to upgrade their skills. Support staff also undergo an annual staff assessment where training and development issues are raised with action plans put into place.

6.8 IBF's established class system has a team of professional class teachers who monitor the daily student life in class and identify those in need of further support; they are supported by the head teacher and full-time counsellors. The head teacher, also known as the head class teacher, class tutor and class monitor, is the main individual that students access for help with teaching, learning, living on campus, psychological and other related issues; students have expressed the important role these teachers play and consider them very valuable in their lives and learning journey. Counsellors are teachers specialising in ethical education student management; while class tutors are teachers who manage, help and psychologically monitor student groups with the assistance of peer tutors who are senior students aiming to help new students. Students who are struggling, either psychologically or academically, have action plans put in place as part of their support from the counsellor and/or head teachers; this, at times, includes involving the students' parents. The teachers who undertake support roles demonstrated to the team that their support roles are streamlined into their teaching roles and they work effectively in ensuring that students are supported accordingly. The role extends further into guiding students in broadening their learning externally such as participating in the Model United Nations in Beijing.

6.9 Students work with the School to provide support to their peers in several roles that include peer tutors, peer counsellors and class representatives; these roles are overseen by the Office of Student Affairs. Peer tutors, who are also referred to as deputy head teachers or peer mentors, are senior students who are appointed by the teacher for one year with the aim of helping high school students adapt to campus life in their first year. They assist the head class teachers and are allocated a maximum of 60 students; the peer tutors the team met commented on how they are busy at the beginning of the semester in helping the new students cope with higher education learning and life with weekly meetings. They commented that the role allows them to enhance their leadership skills and ultimately learn more about themselves in the process. Peer counsellors, also known as student counsellors, are available in each class to provide psychological assistance to their fellow students. They are trained in mental health education and counselling to undertake their roles effectively. Each class also has two to three student representatives; their main role is to collate issues

raised by students in their class and meet with the Dean, heads of academic departments and heads of offices to ensure issues related to teaching, learning and life on campus are raised and dealt with. The team acknowledged the varied roles students play in supporting each other and **recommend** that IBF implement an approach to capturing and disseminating the experiences and good practice of students who are working in a student support capacity.

6.10 The team was provided with examples that indicate the usefulness of the student support roles. The team was informed further that the School keeps an eye on students within a student support role and that these students complete a feedback form; but the team was unclear on how these support roles are evaluated to ensure effectiveness. The team therefore **recommends** that IBF put in place a systematic evaluation of the services provided by students working in a student support capacity.

6.11 Students are given the opportunity to study abroad and the Office of International Exchange and Cooperation oversees students who study abroad and are overseas exchange students. The School's website publishes information about requirements for studying abroad with details on the support systems available. The teachers the team met gave an example of how they are able to go overseas and support their students by meeting with them, as well as the lecturers to get feedback on the students' progress.

6.12 As placements and internships are a requirement and a module in the curriculum, the Office of Career Service manages the oversight of placements. This includes preparing students for placements and ensuring the quality of companies to provide placements. Teachers play a key role in managing the student internships and students are allowed to select their own allocation under the management of their teacher. While on placement students are supported by their teacher and a supervisor in placements, students sign an internship agreement with the company and are provided with an internship handbook by the faculty. They also have to complete an internship diary and write a report that is used to evaluate their placement. Employers commented positively on how these support systems and preparations allow IBF students to stand above their peers from other institutions in the region and has led to them employing the students and a positive relationship being fostered with the School due to the quality of students and support provided.

6.13 As alumni, students are supported by the Office of Student Affairs in setting up alumni branches across China and assigning alumni to oversee the branches. The alumni the team met commented on the positive relationship they have with the School and highlighted the support provided after graduation as essential in maintaining contact with the School and helping them manage their careers.

6.14 The examples cited in the previous paragraphs demonstrate the supportive ethos IBF has with regard to student support; the team therefore identifies the comprehensive support provided to students throughout their student journey, that ensures timely intervention where required, as **good practice**.

6.15 IBF has appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and has policies and procedures in place to ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided. The team therefore concludes that Standard 1.6 is **met**.

Standard 1.7 Information management

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

Findings

7.1 Core institutional information relating to teachers, students and school operations is collected and held on the BNUZ Intelligent Campus Platform (ICP). IBF uses a range of data sets to inform decision-making and the management of programmes. These data sets include: student-related information (for example, entrance exam score, family information, attendance, course performance); faculty research and training; finance and human resource information. The Employment Office of the Ministry of Education also collects data on student enrolments and graduate employment for tracking and information analysis.

7.2 Academic staff also use the institutional ICP to maintain their own personal career file, including work experience, promotion and training history. When changes are made, these are verified by the BNUZ Human Resource Office. The Scientific Research Secretary at IBF is responsible for recording research projects and academic staff publications and/or achievements, to the BNUZ Scientific Research Department.

7.3 Information relating to teaching operations is supported by the ICP. At the time of the review, BNUZ was carrying out a new information control framework, including risk-assessment; internal controls, supervision and evaluation. Students have the opportunity to evaluate their teachers at the end of each semester. The Director of the IBF Office of Academic Affairs tracks information relating to the quality of teaching operations to identify any anomalies and plan appropriate interventions to resolve issues.

7.4 The collection of information management data is distributed across relevant functional areas, for example: IBF Office of Administration and Finance has responsibility for collecting all financial data; enrolment information is collected by BNUZ Office of Admissions and Career Service; while graduate employment data is captured by the Office of Career Service.

7.5 BNUZ Basic Status of Undergraduate Teaching is regularly monitored by the Higher Education Evaluation Centre (HEEC), which is within the Chinese Ministry of Education. As part of the higher education quality monitoring and evaluation system, universities are subject to a 'five-in-one' evaluation system. BNUZ attaches great importance to and regularly submits Basic Status of Undergraduate Teaching to the HEEC of the Ministry of Education, including educational resources, programmes and courses, teaching and quality management, and student progression.

7.6 The review team had an opportunity to see the ICP in operation. Students who met with the review team confirmed the utility of the ICP and social media used by IBF to communicate with them and to facilitate access to key information about their courses and programmes.

7.7 Prior to each annual enrolment plan being developed, data is analysed from the previous year's entrants by the BNUZ Vice-President, the Office of Academic Affairs and other relevant units. Student progression is recorded and monitored and where a student appears to be encountering difficulties, the relevant supervisors to the IBF Office of Student Affairs trigger an intervention with the student to help resolve the issue.

7.8 Information relating to teaching operations is monitored by the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs and the Director of the IBF Office of Academic Affairs. If there is cause for

concern identified from the monitoring process, the IBF Deputy Dean is notified to enable appropriate action to be taken.

7.9 Information relating to graduate employment and students continuing their studies are held and monitored by IBF and BNUZ Office of Admission and Career Service, including employer satisfaction surveys. Employers who met with the review team indicated that they were very positive about the quality of IBF graduates they recruited.

7.10 Students confirmed that they had access to relevant information to support their studies. Students also evaluate the performance of their course teachers at the end of each semester through an online survey. The Ministry of Education of the PRC also collects data on graduate employment.

7.11 IBF uses an appropriate set of metrics for internal and external reporting. Feedback on academic and student activity is engaged with positively and is used to inform decision-making and the enhancement of provision, through the various quality assurance processes. Consequently, the review team concludes that Standard 1.7 is **met**.

Standard 1.8 Public information

Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and readily accessible.

Findings

8.1 Public information includes print, online information and social media. Online public information, including the WeChat platform, is governed by BNUZ and IBF's website management regulations to ensure accuracy of information, while BNUZ staff from the International Network and Information Centre, and IBF staff from the Office of Administration and Finance and the Laboratory centre, take responsibility for the updating and management of the website. Print information that includes outdoor publicity material are governed by BNUZ rules. BNUZ Office of International Exchange and Cooperation produces promotional material for overseas programmes.

8.2 Online information is mainly published through both the English and Chinese versions of the IBF website with other information platforms utilised, including WeChat Public Subscription, QQ and Weibo. The general website publishes information about IBF - its governance, strategy, processes, policies and programme specifications; it targets the general public as well as prospective and current students, alumni and staff members.

8.3 Print information is normally printed in June each year soon after the National College Entrance Examination of China in order to provide timely information for students applying for the entrance examinations of IBF and includes an admission profile and admission brochure which are distributed countrywide. Both online and print material are designed by BNUZ Office of Admission and Career Service who also check the veracity of the information.

8.4 Prospective students are given the admission profile of BNUZ, the admission profile of IBF and IBF's brochure to help students make informed decisions about the programme, its contents and finances. The students also have access to the recruitment handbook which is available online.

8.5 Once on the programme, students are issued with a variety of resources such as the programme handbooks, student handbooks and guidebooks for the 2+2 projects. Current students use approved course textbooks that are bilingual and follow a stringent approval process. Students also use an online forum known as Education Online (EOL) where they can access their course syllabus, content, timetable, assignment release, Questions and Answers. The team was informed that IBF's website publishes information that would also help students seeking to study abroad, with specific criteria outlined. Students also utilise mobile applications as part of their learning process.

8.6 On completion of their programme, transcripts, degree certification and minor certificates are issued by the BNUZ Office of Academic Affairs.

8.7 Staff utilise the website and access information at different levels according to their roles - the more senior, the more access is granted. The team had an opportunity to witness the different platforms that teachers use as well as student-facing ones; these all had appropriate controls in place which allow the user to access and comment on relevant information.

8.8 The team met IBF alumni who confirmed that they maintain a relationship with IBF after graduation. Alumni communication takes the form of surveys, participating in WeChat alumni groups, emails and telephone calls from the School with some of the relationships

moving into a supportive and business working capacity with alumni taking on IBF students as interns within their organisations.

8.9 IBF publishes information about the full range of its activities, including programmes. The information is found to be fit-for-purpose by staff and students and is up-to-date and readily accessible. The review team therefore conclude that Standard 1.8 is **met**.

Standard 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Findings

9.1 Annual monitoring and periodic review are conducted according to governmental requirements. Since 2018, undergraduate programme specialities have had to be mapped against the Higher Education Undergraduate Program Teaching Quality National Standard. This standard is used as the frame of reference for an annual self-assessment report on the quality of the programmes. The self-assessment reports are reviewed through the Office of Academic Affairs and then the IBF Teaching Guidance Committee and the IBF Academic Committee, before going to the University's senior management team and the Academic Degree Committee for final approval and transmission to the Guangdong Education Committee. IBF's recently-introduced Teaching Quality Assurance Committee will now have oversight at faculty level. The team had difficulty discerning the trail of the reports through the committees but the reports themselves were substantial and clearly respond to the detailed and specific requirements of the regional and national government, with significant use of data on student recruitment, retention, progression and achievement and focus on issues of strategic significance to IBF. Heads of departments and other 'front line' staff were well aware of the reporting requirements.

9.2 The team heard from IBF that the Department of Education of Guangdong Province has set a requirement for a new programme to be subject to periodic review by BNUZ after four years. A periodic review report is not yet due under this new arrangement, which provides for a programme review to be approved by BNUZ and then reported to the Department of Education of Guangdong Province.

9.3 The University also participates in periodic surveys, for example, Department of Education of Guangdong Province organised a 'Program Satisfaction for Students' survey in 2018, involving higher education institutions in Guangdong, enabling IBF to benchmark its performance against other institutions.

9.4 There is a Quality Engineering Project initiative and an Education and Teaching Reform Project. These initiatives are intended to support the development of good/best practice over a period of two to three years. Successful projects are disseminated within BNUZ and shared with the Department of Education of Guangdong Province, which provides external scrutiny.

9.5 The University and IBF have several mechanisms for continuous quality control and periodic review and the team notes the rigour with which the effective and reliable delivery of teaching is managed and facilitated, with significant use of data on student admission, retention, progression and achievement. This led the review team to conclude that Standard 1.9 is **met**.

Standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

Findings

10.1 The main source of external quality assurance is the regulation of the Ministry of Education and the Department of Education of Guangdong Province. BNUZ is subject to ongoing scrutiny through the Department of Education of Guangdong Province and an Advisory Committee works with reference to the National Standard for assessing the quality of undergraduate teaching. BNUZ also has to apply the Specialty Catalog and Introduction of Undergraduate Course of Common Colleges and Universities (2012). Since 2018, undergraduate programme specialities have had to be mapped against the Higher Education Undergraduate Program Teaching Quality National Standard. Other forms of regular scrutiny are set out in the following paragraphs.

10.2 There is a University Quality Engineering Project initiative and a Teaching Reform Project. These initiatives are intended to support the development of good/best practice over a period of two to three years. Successful projects are disseminated within BNUZ.

10.3 A recently-created Advisory Committee includes well-known experts and scholars, entrepreneurs and staff from relevant government departments. The Advisory Committee is responsible for providing decision-making consultations on the development strategy, major policies and the improvement of teaching quality within IBF. It is too early to assess the impact of this committee but the team heard evidence of the close and valuable relationships between IBF, and local and regional employers and graduates who work together on the generation of employment opportunities. BNUZ also makes use of graduate feedback through annual MyCOS evaluations, conducted by a Chinese data analytics company that specialises in higher education management data. Visits by IBF personnel to graduates in their workplaces also take place and IBF brings graduates back as visiting graduates and through the Back to School symposium.

10.4 This current International Quality Review by QAA is seen by IBF as an additional method of external scrutiny in the recognition of IBF's strategy and the improvement of quality assurance as a result of benchmarking international standards and as a means of international exchange of good practice.

10.5 Overall, the range of regular external quality assurance to which IBF is subject leads the team to conclude that Standard 1.10 is **met**.

Glossary

Action plan

A plan developed by the institution after the QAA review report has been published, which is signed off by the head of the institution. It responds to the recommendations in the report and gives any plans to capitalise on the identified good practice.

Annual monitoring

Checking a process or activity every year to see whether it meets expectations for standards and quality. Annual reports normally include information about student achievements and may comment on the evaluation of courses and modules.

Collaborative arrangement

A formal arrangement between a degree-awarding body and another higher education provider. These may be degree-awarding bodies with which the institution collaborates to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of the degree-awarding bodies. Alternatively, they may be other delivery organisations who deliver part or all of a proportion of the institution's higher education programmes.

Degree-awarding body

Institutions that have authority, for example from a national agency, to issue their own awards. Institutions applying to IQR may be degree-awarding bodies themselves or may collaborate to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of degree-awarding bodies.

Desk-based analysis

An analysis by the review team of evidence, submitted by the institution, that enables the review team to identify its initial findings and subsequently supports the review team as it develops its review findings.

Enhancement

See **quality enhancement**.

European Standards and Guidelines

For details, including the full text on each standard, see www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg.

Examples of practice

A list of policies and practices that a review team may use when considering the extent to which an institution meets the standards for review. The examples should be considered as a guide only, in acknowledgment that not all of them will be appropriate for all institutions.

Facilitator

The member of staff identified by the institution to act as the principal point of contact for the QAA officer and who will be available during the review visit, to assist with any questions or requests for additional documentation.

Good practice

A feature of good practice is a process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to the institution's higher education provision.

Lead student representative

An optional voluntary role that is designed to allow students at the institution applying for IQR to play a central part in the organisation of the review.

Oversight

Objective scrutiny, monitoring and quality assurance of educational provision.

Peer reviewers

Members of the review team who make the decisions in relation to the review of the institution. Peer reviewers have experience of managing quality and academic standards in higher education or have recent experience of being a student in higher education.

Periodic review

An internal review of one or more programmes of study, undertaken by institutions periodically (typically once every five years), using nationally agreed reference points, to confirm that the programmes are of an appropriate academic standard and quality. The process typically involves experts from other higher education providers. It covers areas such as the continuing relevance of the programme, the currency of the curriculum and reference materials, the employability of graduates and the overall performance of students. Periodic review is one of the main processes whereby institutions can continue to assure themselves about the academic quality and standards of their awards.

Programme of study

An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification. UK higher education programmes must be approved and validated by UK degree-awarding bodies.

Quality enhancement

The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported.

QAA officer

The person appointed by QAA to manage the review programme and to act as the liaison between the review team and the institution.

Quality assurance

The systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic awards meet the necessary standards, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved.

Recognition of prior learning

Assessing previous learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college and university, and/or through life and work experiences.

Recommendation

Review teams make recommendations where they agree that an institution should consider developing or changing a process or a procedure in order to improve the institution's higher education provision.

Reference points

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

Self-evaluation document

A self-evaluation report by an institution. The submission should include information about the institution as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of its quality systems.

Student submission

A document representing student views that describes what it is like to be a student at the institution, and how students' views are considered in the institution's decision-making and quality assurance processes.

Validation

The process by which an institution ensures that its academic programmes meet expected academic standards and that students will be provided with appropriate learning opportunities. It may also be applied to circumstances where a degree-awarding institution gives approval for its awards to be offered by a partner institution or organisation.

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